



First lady Mary Pat Christie, left, laughs as New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie greet volunteers and family and neighbors outside a renovated home that was heavily damaged by Superstorm Sandy in a town near MetLife Stadium, where Sunday's Super Bowl game is to be played, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014, in Moonachie, N.J. (AP Photo/Mel Evans)

Ex-Port Official: Christie Knew About Lane Closings

KATE ZERNIKE
 © 2014 New York Times
 The former Port Authority official who oversaw the lane closings at the George Washington Bridge, central to the scandal now swirling

around Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey said Friday that "evidence exists" the governor knew about the lane closings when they were happening. In a letter released by his

lawyer, the former official, David Wildstein, a school friend of Christie's who was appointed with the governor's blessing at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which controls

the bridge, described the order to close the lanes as "the Christie administration's order" and said "evidence exists as well tying Mr. Christie to having knowledge of the lane closures,

during the period when the lanes were closed, contrary to what the governor stated publicly in a two-hour press conference."

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AMANDA KNOX:
 WILL EXTRADITION
 WAR COME NEXT?

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SPORTS FANS: ARE
 YOU READY FOR
 SOME FOOTBALL?

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Germany:

Kerry seeks to calm anger at NSA reports

FRANK JORDANS
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Friday that relations with Germany have gone

gence contractor Edward Snowden last year were allegations that the National Security Agency for years targeted the cellphone of German Chancellor Ange-

meier. "We've been through a rough period in the last months. But I'm pleased to be here to direct our focus toward the future and to strengthen

that could be resolved. But he gave no indication that the U.S. would sign a "no spy" accord that Germany wants, much less apologize for its past actions.



US Secretary of State John Kerry, left, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, share a smile as they address the media at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014. Kerry met with members of the German government before attending the Munich Security Conference.

(AP Photo/Brendan Smialowski)

through a "rough patch" recently because of revelations about NSA spying, but insisted that the two countries can put the episode behind them. Among the reports to come out of documents leaked by former intelli-

la Merkel. Kerry stopped in Berlin on his way to a security conference in Munich to discuss the spying issue personally with Merkel and her foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. "It's no secret," said Kerry after meeting with Stein-

the trust and confidence that has always characterized this relationship." Appearing before reporters shortly afterward alongside Merkel, Kerry described the discord between Berlin and Washington as "bumps in the road"

Echoing the Obama administration's previous line, Kerry said the threat of terrorism requires new intelligence gathering methods, and that these help protect U.S. allies, too. Merkel said she was optimistic a solution would be found. □

Clamor rises over Syria on its chemical arms pledge

RICK GLADSTONE
NICK CUMMING-BRUCE
ALAN COWELL

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The head of the United Nations chemical weapons watchdog added his voice Friday to calls on Syria to accelerate the elimination of its chemical weapons, a day after Washington accused the Syrian government of deliberately stalling the weapons' removal from the country to gain bargaining leverage and - in a new complaint - reneging on a pledge to destroy the 12 facilities that produced them.

In a statement issued Friday, Ahmet Uzumcu, the head of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, based in The Hague, Netherlands, called for "more rapid progress" in getting the chemicals out of Syria, saying, "The need for the process to pick up pace is obvious." The organization is helping the United Nations oversee destruction of the arsenal.

The proliferation of calls for an end to delays reflected growing impatience with President Bashar Assad of Syria, who renounced his chemical weapons arsenal and joined the treaty that bans them after an international uproar over an Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack in the country's civil war.

Under a Russian-U.S. deal that averted a U.S. airstrike on Syrian military sites, Assad pledged that the entire chemical arsenal would be destroyed by the middle of this year.

A U.N. Security Council resolution, unanimously passed Sept. 27, was meant to ensure Syria's compliance.

Assad's government initially cooperated with an international team overseeing the sequestering of the weapons and destruction of the equipment needed to activate them. □

Cruise line cites fog, not illness, for return

RAMIT PLUSHNICK-MASTI
Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A cruise ship that had more than 180 passengers and crew fall sick with an apparent stomach virus returned to a Houston-area port early due to a dense fog advisory and not because people were vomiting and had diarrhea, a Princess Cruises spokeswoman said Friday. But passengers whose seven-day vacation was cut short, missing their last stop in Belize, questioned that version of events. They said the crew announced on the second day of the cruise that people were

sick, apparently with highly contagious norovirus, and that extra precautions were being taken to ensure it didn't spread.

A Royal Caribbean cruise returned early to New Jersey on Wednesday after nearly 700 people became ill with Norovirus. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday confirmed the outbreak and said 630 passengers and 54 crewmembers were sickened. The Explorer of the Seas was carrying 3,050 passengers.

But Princess Cruises spokeswoman Julie Benson said the situation aboard the

Caribbean Princess was not the same.

"If we did not have the potential of the closure of the port because of fog we would not have come in early," Benson said.

The National Weather Service says it issued a warning about sea fog from Friday through Sunday. The Port of Houston says pilots halt all docking activity if fog is too dense.

The Caribbean Princess departed Jan. 25 for the Caribbean with more than 4,200 people on board. It returned Thursday night instead of Saturday. Cruise liners are required to report

to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention if more than 3 percent of the passengers on board the ship become sick.

According to the CDC website, there are about a dozen cases annually where so many people become ill on a cruise, the vast majority with norovirus. This year there have already been three reported cases, including on the Caribbean Princess, and at least two appear to be due to that stomach virus. Overall, though, the CDC says only about 1 percent to 2 percent of norovirus outbreaks occur on ships. □

Big companies join Obama to help long-term unemployed



President Barack Obama addresses politicians and business executives about the plight of the long-term unemployed, at the White House in Washington, Jan. 31, 2014. Obama shortly after signed an executive order pledging that the government won't discriminate against the long-term unemployed in hiring, and 21 of the country's 50 largest companies have pledged to do likewise.

(Stephen Crowley/The New York Times)

PETER BAKER

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WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama has persuaded some of the nation's largest companies, including Wal-Mart, Apple, General Motors and Ford, to revamp their hiring practices to avoid discriminating against applicants who have been out of work for a long stretch of time.

Obama hosted a group of corporate chief executives at the White House on Friday to highlight those efforts and the use of presidential persuasion to help the jobless find work. In all, White House officials said, about 300 businesses have agreed to new hiring policies, including 21 of the nation's 50 largest companies and 47 of the top 200.

"Folks who've been unemployed the longest often have the toughest time getting back to work," Obama said at the White House event. "It's a cruel catch-22: The longer you're unemployed, the more unemployable you may seem. Now this is an illusion, but it's one that, unfortunately, we know statistically is happening out there." Those out of work for longer stretches, he said, are just as educated and experienced as newly unemployed.

To illustrate the point, the

White House had Obama be introduced by a formerly jobless veteran who eventually found work with the help of a training program. Erick Varela, a former U.S. Army combat infantryman, returned to California in 2008 and had trouble finding a job for which he was qualified. He ended up unemployed and homeless until enrolling in a program started by the Pacific Gas and Electric Co. that enabled him to become an apprentice electrician.

Among the companies whose chief executives appeared with Obama, according to the White House, were Motorola, eBay, Deloitte, BlackRock, Morgan Stanley, Boeing, Bank of America, Marriott International, McDonald's and Walgreen.

The challenge of the long-term unemployed has become especially acute as the economy struggles to recover from one of the deepest recessions in modern times. While unemployment among those out of work for a short time has returned to historical norms, officials said, it remains particularly high among those who have been seeking jobs for longer periods. Nearly 4 million Americans are categorized as long-term unemployed. □

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Ex-NY mayor Bloomberg named UN climate envoy

EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Former New York mayor Michael Bloomberg was appointed Friday to be the U.N. special envoy for cities and climate change, a position that will give the billionaire businessman and philanthropist an international stage to press for action to combat global warming.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon chose Bloomberg, who made combating climate change a major focus of his 12 years as mayor and was very outspoken on how cities should be run to cope with ever increasing populations without harming the environment.

U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said Bloomberg will assist the U.N. chief in his

consultations with mayors and other key parties "to raise political will and mobilize action among cities as part of his longer-term strategy to advance efforts on climate change."

The secretary-general also wants Bloomberg to bring "concrete solutions" to the

climate summit he is hosting in New York on Sept. 23 to try to galvanize action to combat climate change, Haq said.

Bloomberg, 71, tweeted that he was "honored" by the appointment.

"Cities are taking measurable action to reduce emissions, emerging as leaders in the battle against climate change," he tweeted.

"I look forward to working with cities around the world and the UN to accelerate progress" to combat global warming.

Bloomberg served three terms as New York's mayor before handing the reins of the America's largest city to Bill de Blasio on Jan. 1. He is scheduled to co-host the Feb. 4-6 mayors' summit of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group in Johannesburg.

The group is a network of large cities from around the world committed to taking measures locally that reduce climate-warming greenhouse gases and global climate risks.

At the summit, Bloomberg will hand over the chair and presidency of the group to Eduardo Paes, the mayor of Rio de Janeiro.

His appointment drew widespread praise.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry tweeted: "We need your energy and hard work to help address climate change."

Former vice-president Al Gore, who won the Nobel Peace Prize for spotlighting the impact of climate change, tweeted, "Mike Bloomberg will bring leadership & unique experience to UN Special Envoy post — an important job at a crucial time." □



Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg speaks in New York. Bloomberg has been chosen by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to be a U.N. envoy for cities and climate change, U.N. diplomats said Friday, Jan. 31, 2014. The billionaire businessman and philanthropist turned politician made combating climate change a major focus of his 12 years as mayor. He was also very outspoken on how cities should be run to cope with ever increasing populations.

(AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

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FBI: powder discovered near Super Bowl appears harmless

KATIE ZEZIMA

Associated Press

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — A suspicious powder

mailed to several locations in New York and New Jersey, including at least five hotels near the site of Sunday's NFL championship game known as the Super Bowl, appeared not to be dangerous, the FBI said Friday.

The agency said further testing was being conducted on the substance, but it is "within normal values."

White powder also was found in a letter sent to former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's business in New York City, where police said preliminary tests showed it posed no threat. A federal law enforcement official, who wasn't authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said powder from one envelope tested positive for baking soda. It's not clear where that letter was sent.

Hackensack University Medical Center received a number of people for evaluation because they came in contact with the letters, but a hospital spokeswoman

said there were no reported illnesses or injuries.

In New Jersey, the suspicious mailings went to at least five hotels, Carlstadt Police Detective John Cleary said.

The mailings arrived at an Econo Lodge in Carlstadt, a Homestead Suites hotel in East Rutherford and a Renaissance Inn in Rutherford, Cleary said. Investigators intercepted additional envelopes from a mail truck before they reached a Holiday Inn Express and Hampton Inn in Carlstadt, he said.

At the Homewood Suites, General Manager Thomas Martucci said the letter sent to his motel contained yellow powder and a typed letter inside referencing al-Qaida and the Dallas FBI.

"It was nonsense," he said. Lauren Wallace, a jet company employee from Los Angeles staying at the Homewood Suites, said she saw hazardous-material trucks outside and was shooed back from the lobby to her room around 11:15 a.m. by a hotel employee. She said she was allowed out of her room about 40 minutes later. □

Ex-Port Official: Christie Knew About Lane Closings



As wife Mary Pat Christie holds the Bible, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie is sworn in for his second term by New Jersey Supreme Court Chief Justice Stuart Rabner, right, Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2014, in Trenton, N.J. The former Port Authority official who personally oversaw the lane closings at the George Washington Bridge, said Friday that "evidence exists" the governor knew about the lane closings when they were happening.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans)

Continued from front

During his news conference, Christie specifically said he had no knowledge that traffic lanes leading to the bridge had been closed until after they were reopened.

"I had no knowledge of this - of the planning, the execution or anything about it - and that I first found out about it after it was over," he said. "And even then, what I was told was that it was a traffic study."

The letter does not specify what the evidence was. Nonetheless, it is the first signal that Christie, a Republican, may have been aware of the closings, and marks a striking break with a previous ally.

The letter, sent from Wildstein's lawyer, Alan Zegas, is to the Port Authority's general counsel, contesting the agency's decision over the legal fees. But it is clearly meant as a threat to the governor. Indeed, the allegations make up just one paragraph in a two-page letter that otherwise focuses on Wildstein's demand that his legal fees be paid and that he be indemnified.

Zegas did not respond to requests to discuss the letter, which also consisted of a strong defense of

Wildstein against negative comments Christie made about him during the news conference.

"Mr. Wildstein contests the accuracy of various statements that the governor made about him and he can prove the inaccuracy of some," the letter added.

The bridge scandal erupted in early January, when documents emerged revealing that a deputy chief of staff to the governor, Bridget Anne Kelly, had sent an email to Wildstein saying, "Time for some traffic problems in Fort Lee," the town at the New Jersey end of the bridge, where Christie's aides had pursued but failed to receive an endorsement from the mayor, who is a Democrat. The letter does not delve into the motives behind the lane closings.

A spokesman for Christie did not immediately return a call seeking comment Friday. Christie has steadfastly denied that he knew before January that anyone in his administration had been responsible for the lane closings, and his administration has tried to portray it as the actions of a rogue staff member.

The governor fired Kelly. Wildstein communicated the order to close the lanes to bridge operators. He resigned from his position as

the director of interstate capital projects at the Port Authority in early December, saying the scandal over the lane closings in September had become "a distraction." In a statement that documents show was personally approved by the governor, the administration praised him as "a tireless advocate for New Jersey's interests at the Port Authority."

The Port Authority has since refused to pay his legal costs associated with inquiries by the New Jersey Legislature and U.S. attorney into the lane closings. In his two-hour news conference, Christie said his friendship with Wildstein had been overstated; that while the governor had been class president and an athlete, he did not re-

call Wildstein well from that period and had rarely seen him in recent months.

The Wall Street Journal has since published photos showing the two men laughing together at a Sept. 11 anniversary event - which happened during the four days the lanes were closed. A high school baseball coach also recalled them as friends in high school.

The Legislature has sent subpoenas to Wildstein and 17 other people as well as the governor's campaign and administration seeking information about the lane closings. That information is due back Monday.

Kelly's email was revealed in documents Wildstein submitted in response to an earlier subpoena from the Legislature. □

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Keystone XL oil pipeline clears major hurdle

MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The long-delayed Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada moved a significant step toward completion Friday as the U.S. State Department raised no major environmental objections to its construction. The finding is likely to be welcomed by Republicans and some oil- and gas-producing states but is sure to further rankle environmentalists already at odds with President Barack Obama over his energy policy.

The department report stops short of recommending approval of the \$7 billion pipeline, which has become a major symbol of the political debate over climate change. But the review gives Obama political cover if he chooses to endorse the pipeline in spite of opposition from many fellow Democrats and environmental groups. Foes say the pipeline would carry "dirty oil" that contributes to global warming. They also worry about a spill.

Republicans and business and labor groups have urged Obama to approve the pipeline to create thousands of jobs and move toward North American energy independence. The pipeline is also strongly supported by Democrats in oil and gas-producing states, including Sens. Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Mark

Begich of Alaska and Mark Pryor of Arkansas. All face re-election this year and could be politically damaged by rejection of the pipeline. Republican Mitt Romney carried all three states in the 2012 presidential election.



Large sections of pipe for the Keystone XL pipeline are shown in Sumner, Texas. The long-delayed oil pipeline from Canada moved a significant step toward completion Friday as the U.S. State Department raised no major environmental objections to its construction.

The 1,179-mile (1,900-kilometer) pipeline would travel through the heart of the United States, carrying oil derived from tar sands in western Canada to a hub in Nebraska, where it would connect with existing pipelines to carry more than 800,000 barrels of crude oil a day to refineries in Texas.

A State Department official said Canadian tar sands are likely to be developed regardless of U.S. action on the pipeline, adding that other options to get the oil from Canada to Gulf

Coast refineries — including rail, trucks and barges — would be worse for climate change. A news conference was set for later Friday.

State Department approval is needed because the pipeline crosses a U.S.

and natural gas to renewables such as wind and solar power. The remarks were a rebuff to some of his environmental allies who argued that Obama's support of expanded oil and gas production doesn't make sense for a presi-

dent who wants to reduce pollution linked to global warming. "We believe that continued reliance on an 'all-of-the-above' energy strategy would be fundamentally at odds with your goal of cutting carbon pollution," the environmentalists wrote in a letter to Obama. Obama blocked the Keystone XL pipeline in January 2012, saying he did not have enough time for a fair review before a looming deadline forced on him by congressional Republicans. □

The new report comes only days after Obama's State of the Union address, in which he reiterated his support for an "all-of-the-above" energy strategy that embraces a wide range of sources, from oil

Gas continues to flow from rig off US coast

BILL FULLER
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Crews continued to work Friday to stop natural gas flowing from a drilling rig off the Louisiana coast, and the Coast Guard said workers had managed to cut the flow in half.

Officials lost control of the rig Thursday, according to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement. No injuries or pollution have been reported. BSEE said most crew members were evacuated from the rig, which was drilling in 262 feet of water about 108 miles southwest of Lafayette.

The rig operator is EnVen Energy Ventures of Metairie, Louisiana.

EnVen Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Garrett said gas, water and sand are flowing, but no pollution has reached the Gulf of Mexico. Gas is being vented off the rig while crews work to kill the well, he added.

Work is underway to secure the well, said Deanna Castillo, a spokeswoman for rig owner Rowan Companies. "All personnel currently aboard the rig are safe and non-essential personnel have been evacuated, all well control equipment is functioning as designed (and) there has been no environmental impact," she said Thursday. □

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US Financial Front:

American consumer spending up 0.4% in December

M. CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans increased their spending at a solid pace for the second straight month in December even though their income was flat.

salaries were basically flat last month, reflecting a sharp slowing in employment growth.

For all of 2013, income growth was 2.8 percent, the weakest performance since 2009 when income fell 2.8 percent as the

provements in the housing market, job prospects and consumer confidence.

While consumer confidence has been rising, the University of Michigan index of consumer sentiment released Friday showed a slight drop in January

come in December, down from 4.3 percent in November. It was the lowest monthly saving rate since it dropped to 3.6 percent last January.

For the year, the saving rate slipped 4.5 percent, the lowest level since the rate was 3 percent in 2007. The saving rate had fallen before the Great Recession as surging home prices made Americans feel wealthier and more willing to spend more and save less. However, once the recession took hold and millions of Americans lost their jobs while home prices plunged, Americans became more frugal and the saving rate rose, peaking at 6.1 percent in 2009 and remaining above 5 percent for the next three years.

Consumer spending is closely watched because it accounts for 70 percent of economic activity.

For the October-December quarter, consumer spending was rising at the fastest pace in three years, giving economists hope that the economy has finally turned the corner to faster growth after a prolonged period of sub-par activity since the recession ended in June 2009.

Consumers have been buying durable goods such as cars as well as non-durable products such as clothing.

While the overall economy grew just 1.9 percent in 2013, some analysts think growth could accelerate to around 3 percent this year. If it does, 2014 would be the best year for growth since the recession ended. This year, economists think the U.S. economy will get a lift from continued gains in hiring. Further steady job growth would give more households money to spend and help increase consumer spending.

In addition, U.S. manufacturers are expected to gain from rising global demand. And housing construction and auto sales are expected to strengthen further in 2014.

Stronger growth and the improving job market are the primary reasons the Federal Reserve is pressing ahead with a plan to scale back its economic stimulus. Most forecasters think the economy will manage to withstand such factors as turmoil in emerging economies, which have been rattled by the pullback in the Fed's stimulus and the prospect of higher U.S. interest rates.

One major reason for optimism: A belief that the government will be less of a drag than in 2013, when higher federal taxes and spending cuts trimmed overall growth by an estimated 1.5 percentage points. □



A couple carries shopping bags as they cross the street in San Francisco. The Commerce Department reported how much consumers spent and earned in December on Friday, Jan. 31, 2014.

(AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)

Consumer spending rose 0.4 percent in December, compared with November when spending had increased an even stronger 0.6 percent, the Commerce Department reported Friday. That was the best gain in five months. Income, however, showed no gain at all in December after a 0.2 percent rise in November. Wages and

country struggled with a deep recession.

Economists are hoping that stronger economic growth will promote stronger employment and income gains this year.

Chris G. Christopher, director of consumer economics at Global Insight, said that he was looking for stronger growth in consumer spending this year, reflecting im-

to 81.2 compared to December reading of 82.5, a decline attributed in part to recent setbacks in the stock market.

The combination of stronger spending in December but no improvement in income meant that consumers tapped savings to finance their spending. The saving rate slipped to 3.9 percent of after-tax in-

Amanda Knox: heading for an extradition fight?

**GENE JOHNSON
PETE YOST**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Roman Polanski. Edward Snowden. Manuel Noriega. Over the years, the famous and the infamous have been caught up in the legal process called extradition, which governs whether one country will turn over fugitives from justice to another country. It may ultimately be the turn of Amanda Knox, whose murder conviction in the stabbing of her roommate has been reinstated by an Italian court, raising the specter of a long extradition fight. She says she'll never willingly go back to Italy.

The Knox case is special because it raises the question of whether the U.S. government would send one of its own citizens to a foreign country to face a long prison term.

The answer: It's been done before, though in less high-profile cases involving the governments of Canada, Mexico and other nations. The U.S. has extradition treaties with more than 100

countries, including Italy, providing what would appear to be a strong legal foundation in favor of a request for Knox's return to Italy.

"It's absolutely not the case that an individual will not be extradited just because they are a U.S. citizen," says Douglas McNabb, an international criminal defense attorney and an expert in international extradition law.

Time is on the side of Knox's lawyers. Proceedings could take up to a year to play out in the Italian courts.

If Italy were to file a provisional arrest warrant after the Italian proceedings end, Knox's lawyers could take the U.S. government through a judicial process in the courts and an administrative process at the State Department, which would make the decision. State Department deputy spokeswoman Marie Harf declined comment Friday when asked whether the U.S. has received an extradition request for Knox from Italian authorities, saying that information is "private and confidential." She said

the State Department is monitoring the case as it works its way through the Italian legal system but refused to provide further details, such as whether Secretary of State John Kerry would make the final decision on Knox if Italy asks for her to be returned. The U.S. has had an extradition treaty with Italy since 1984 and has denied at least several requests since then.

Mary Fan, a former federal prosecutor, suggested that any decision by the State Department on whether to return Knox to Italy is "a matter of both law and politics." From a U.S. standpoint, the case at first seems to raise questions about double jeopardy — being tried twice for the same offense, something that's barred by the U.S. Constitution. Knox was first convicted, then acquitted, then, on Thursday, the initial conviction was reinstated.

Some observers dismiss the double-jeopardy argument because Knox's acquittal was not finalized by Italy's highest court.



Amanda Knox prepares to leave the set following a television interview, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014 in New York. Knox said she will fight the reinstated guilty verdict against her and ex-boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito in the 2007 slaying of a British roommate in Italy and vowed to "never go willingly" to face her fate in that country's judicial system. "I'm going to fight this to the very end," she said in an interview with Robin Roberts on ABC's "Good Morning America."

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Questions also have been raised about whether the State Department might conduct a review of the evidence and ultimately decide it doesn't support extradition. The treaty says the country requesting extradition shall provide a summary of the facts and evidence in the case that establish "a reasonable basis to believe that the person sought committed the offense."

But Christopher Jenks, a former Army attorney who served as a State Department legal adviser and now teaches at Southern Methodist University's law school, said that's a low bar, and that there's "no reason why Italy wouldn't be able to put together a sufficient extradition request."

He also noted that although any request would wind up before a U.S. federal judge, the court's role would largely be to ensure the paperwork is in order and that basic requirements are met.

"She's not going to be able to relitigate 'did she do it' in a federal court," he said.

"Your chances of anything coming of that are slim to none."

Some of the best-known extradition battles have been the reverse of what the Knox case would be. Filmmaking legend Polanski, leaker Snowden and Wikileaks founder Julian Assange have been the targets of U.S. efforts to bring them back to this country. Polanski, a French citizen, fled to France before he was to be sentenced in the U.S. for having sex with a minor. France does not extradite its own citizens. Snowden fled from Hong Kong, which has an extradition treaty with the U.S., to Russia, which doesn't.

Noriega, once the strongman who ran Panama, was extradited from the U.S. to France to Panama to face various drug-related criminal charges.

Assange fled to the Ecuadorian Embassy in London.

Ecuador's "modern leftist" government is having difficult relations with the U.S., even though the two countries have an extradition treaty. □



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Ukraine military censures protesters for occupying buildings

ANDREW E. KRAMER

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KIEV, Ukraine - The Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, after months of neutrality in the country's civil unrest, published a statement Friday that censured anti-government demonstrators for occupying public buildings and raised the specter of military intervention, even though it did not endorse any role for troops in dispersing protesters.

The statement, addressed to President Viktor Yanukovich and expressing support for his efforts to resolve the crisis, said, "Servicemen and Interior Ministry troops of Ukraine called the forceful seizure of government buildings unacceptable." It also said that the protesters were preventing state agencies and local governments from fulfilling their obligations and that any escalation in the conflict "threatens the territorial integrity of the state."

In another sign of a possible role for the military in suppressing the civil uprising here, a former defense minister, Anatoly Hrytsenko, who is now a member of Parliament in the opposition Fatherland party, said military officers had been asked to either sign a pledge supporting Yanukovich as commander in chief or resign.

There were signs Thursday that negotiations that have halted skirmishes between demonstrators and riot police officers in Kiev and brought concessions from the government, including the resignation of the prime minister, were not going well.

On Friday, Yanukovich signed a bill into law that grants amnesty to protesters who leave the government buildings they have occupied. He also signed

legislation repealing an earlier package of laws that had restricted freedom of speech and assembly.

The amnesty law, which lacked support from opposition lawmakers, stipulates that offers of amnesty will not take effect until the prosecutor general certifies that protesters have vacated all occupied administrative buildings, including those in provincial capitals that were seized last week. It also set a 15-day deadline, after which the police would clear the buildings.

At least four demonstrators died during battles with the police last week, and evidence of kidnappings and abuse by the authorities or their surrogates is mounting. Dmitry Bulatov, a prominent opposition figure who had been missing since last week, turned up Thursday in a village outside Kiev and said his captors had crucified him.

Bulatov, who led a group that organized caravans of cars to protests called AutoMaidan, said men speaking with Russian accents had beaten him, cut one ear with a knife and nailed him to a cross. It was not immediately clear how this was done. Journalists reported Friday that he had puncture wounds on his hands. Photographs showed him bloodied and badly hurt.

Stefan Fule, the European Union minister who oversees the joining of new members, posted on Twitter a demand for an immediate investigation into the Bulatov case and other cases of abuse of activists. "Urge authorities to act swiftly on kidnapping and torture," Fule wrote. "This kind of violence and impunity is deplorable and must stop now."



Two opposition supporters learn how to protect themselves behind a shield as they receive training near Kiev's Independence Square, the epicenter of the country's current unrest, Ukraine, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014. Police on Friday opened an investigation into the kidnapping of an opposition activist, who said he was held captive for more than a week and tortured in the latest in a string of mysterious attacks on anti-government protesters in the two-month-long political crisis. The graffiti reads in Ukrainian "Revolution".

(AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti)



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Hollande refuses to take question on love life

RAPHAEL SATTER
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — French President Francois Hollande wants to talk about his country's work with the U.K. on a new combat drone, a multibillion-pound deal which could see France help build new nuclear power plants in the U.K., and thorny questions about his British counterpart David Cameron's contentious relationship to the European Union. Just don't ask him about his love life. Quizzed during a news conference at an English air

base whether his reported philandering had turned France into an "international joke," the 59-year-old French leader deadpanned. "I'm afraid I decline to answer," he said. British journalists had been looking forward to Hollande's appearance, which comes less than a week after the French president officially ended his relationship with Valerie Trierweiler following a report that he was having an affair with glamorous actress Julie Gayet. Instead they got an all-



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Francois Hollande, right, stand at the bar as they arrive for an informal lunch, during a one day summit, at The Swan Inn pub in Swinbrook, near Burford in Oxfordshire, England, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014.

(AP Photo/Stefan Rousseau)

due to hold a joint training exercise later this year, and Cameron said the British military would take France's VBCIs — eight-wheeled infantry tanks — for a test drive with a view toward buying some. There was considerably more daylight between the two leaders on the subject of Europe. Cameron has said he wants to renegotiate key parts of the European Union treaties as a prelude to an in-or-out referendum in Britain. The leaders addressed Syria, too — including a comment from Hollande that between 600 and 700 Britons or U.K. residents had traveled to the Middle Eastern country to fight in its civil war. British intelligence bosses had previously put the figure vaguely at "hundreds." Hollande and Cameron were speaking at an aircraft hangar at England's Brize Norton air base. The two later retired for drinks and grub at a local pub, The Swan Inn. □

too-sober discussion of the enduring relationship between France and Britain, which bore fruit Friday in the form of a nearly \$200 million agreement to develop an armed combat drone, approval of an investment deal for nuclear power in Britain which Hollande valued at 16 billion pounds (more than \$26 bil-

lion), and 15 million pounds earmarked for joint investment on space-related programs. They also agreed on developing an undersea drone — intended to counter mines — and more logistical support for the French military mission in Central African Republic. British and French soldiers are

Killing suspect fails to block extradition from UK

LONDON (AP) — A British murder suspect on Friday lost a bid to block his extradition to South Africa, where he allegedly arranged the killing of his wife during their honeymoon in 2010. Shrien Dewani, 33, is accused of hiring a hit man to kill his 28-year-old bride Anni, who was fatally shot as the couple travelled in a cab on the outskirts of Cape Town. The case has drawn attention in both countries, and has been dragged out by legal wrangling in Britain over whether Dewani is fit

to be extradited. Dewani denies the charges, and his lawyers argue he has post-traumatic stress and depression and shouldn't be sent to South Africa. Britain's High Court on Friday approved Dewani's removal so long as South African authorities could give a guarantee as to how long he would be kept there without trial. "There should be no further delay, provided that proper protection is afforded to the appellant," Judge John Thomas said.

South Africa's justice department welcomed the British decision and said it would "do everything in its power to ensure compliance with the High Court's judgment." South Africa "has consistently expressed its desire to have Mr. Dewani returned to stand trial," spokesman Mthunzi Mhaga said in a statement. Dewani can still attempt to take his case to Britain's Supreme Court, by arguing that the case raises legal questions of general public importance. □

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Motorcycles swarm Venezuela's capital in protest

JOSHUA GOODMAN

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— About 2,000 motorcycles swarmed the streets of Venezuela's capital Friday to protest a proposed nighttime curfew on two-wheelers as part of a government crackdown on crime.

The protest barely disrupted traffic as organizers opted against a cross-town caravan and stayed concentrated near the slum of Petare on the eastern outskirts of Caracas. "Boys, behave. Today we're not going to take anything from anyone," Ricardo Vargas, one of the protest's leaders, said as he walked through the throngs of bikers readying their engines. "Use a helmet. Stop at every light." In the wake of the shooting death this month of a popular actress and former Miss



Motorcyclists protest a proposed nighttime curfew for two-wheelers in Caracas, Venezuela, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014. President Nicolas Maduro's government this month lent its support to proposals to ban motorcycles from circulating at night, arguing that the vehicles are used to carry out murders and kidnappings that have proliferated recently.

(AP Photo/Alejandro Cegarra)

Venezuela, President Nicolas Maduro's government has supported proposals by cities across Venezuela to ban motorcycles from circulating after 7 p.m., ar-

guing that the vehicles are the favored means of escape for hit-men and robbers.

But in cracking down on two-wheelers, Maduro

risks offending part of his socialist revolution's base among the poor. The late Hugo Chavez as president actively courted the support of motorcycle drivers, and rolling gangs of armed political shock troops have long been used by the government to break up opposition rallies.

"It's politically dangerous territory," said sociologist David Smilde, who has spent part of the past two decades teaching in Venezuela and is now a senior fellow at the Washington Office on Latin America.

Still, with polls showing security as Venezuelans' top concern, the government has been under pressure to clamp down.

Venezuela's murder has quadrupled in the 15 years since Chavez came to power, with more than

24,000 killings last year alone, according to the Venezuelan Observatory of Violence. While the government disputes those statistics, it says the vast majority of the slayings are carried out by motorized assassins. The bikers themselves, many of whom work as two-wheeled taxis, say that they're being unfairly targeted. They say poor communities where public transport is slim would be the most hurt by any curfew, which they also say is unconstitutional.

The restrictions recall a ban against passengers on the back of motor bikes enforced in Colombia during the cocaine turf wars of the 1980s and more recently in Honduras, one of the few countries in the world with a higher murder rate than Venezuela. □

Trial concludes for French men accused of Jihadism

ALISSA J. RUBIN

MAÏA de la BAUME

© 2014 New York Times

PARIS - The first trial of French citizens accused of trying to join the rebellion in Syria concluded Friday after lawyers for the government and the defendants presented their arguments in a Paris courtroom.

The judge in the trial, which began Thursday, said he would render a verdict and sentence the men March 7.

The three men - Youssef Ettaoujar, 26; Fares Farsi, 21; and Salah-Eddine Gourmat, 24 - were indicted under a law enacted in 2012 that makes it a crime to have the intent to prepare terrorist acts. All three are Muslims; Farsi and Gourmat carried Algerian passports as well as French passports, while Ettaoujar carried French and Moroccan passports.

All worked in low-paid jobs and live in working-class neighborhoods of Paris or its suburbs.

They were apprehended at the airport in St. Etienne in central France in May 2012 as they were boarding a flight to Gaziantep in Turkey, a border city 60

miles from Syria's largest city, Aleppo.

One said they were inspired by a radical Islamist of Senegalese origin, whom they met through Facebook and later in person in the French city of Nice.

The police said they had found holsters, bulletproof vests, night-vision goggles and cash in the men's luggage when they were picked up in St. Etienne. Photos of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida flags were found in their homes.

Ettaoujar, the apparent leader of the group, said he had hoped to get military training from the French and Americans, whom he said were supplying the rebels fighting the Syrian government of President Bashar Assad.

Ettaoujar is in detention, because he had gone to Mali and was alleged to have had a similar intent to participate in terrorist acts there. Prosecutors said there were worries that he might try to leave again unless he were detained. The other two defendants are free.

The French government is a strong supporter of the Syrian rebels and the first West-

ern government to recognize them, in late 2012. The French government also led the call last year for airstrikes against Assad government targets in the

wake of the discovery that chemical weapons were used against civilians.

Much of the evidence against the suspects was gathered through wiretaps

and searches of computers seized in their homes.

Under the law, the men could each be sentenced to as many as 10 years in prison. □

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Venezuela's best and brightest look for ways out

JOSHUA GOODMAN
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Citizens of Venezuela's socialist revolution have grown accustomed to long lines for everything from bread to buying a car. But 26-year-old Daniela Rodriguez hopes this line will be her last.

Like some 50 other college students and graduates, she's been lounging for the past three days on the cement sidewalks of a busy Caracas office district waiting for a consulate stamp that she hopes will be her ticket to a brighter future. Her destination? Ireland, a country she knows almost nothing about. Not that it matters.

"I'll blindly go anywhere," said Rodriguez, who has been unable to find work as a journalist since graduating college in 2010, instead working as a sales clerk at a clothing store. "Here you kill yourself just to get nowhere, but outside Venezuela in two years your effort pays off."

The sentiment is widely

shared by Venezuela's best and brightest, who are abandoning their homeland in droves rather than wait for a punishing currency crisis, record shortages and 50 percent inflation to ease. But not everyone is fleeing the madness. Some Venezuelans are posing as students and recycling on the black market increasingly scarce hard currency meted out at the official exchange rate to pay for schooling abroad.

The country has long attracted language students from all over the world, and unlike the U.S., Australia and Canada, Venezuelans don't need a visa to enter the European Union.

And while Spain, for years the preferred destination for Latin American emigrants, has youth unemployment of above 50 percent, the Irish economy is recovering steadily from Europe's financial crisis. Venezuelans already studying there report that it's easy to find work, which Ireland's immigrant-friendly laws allow.



Daniela Rodriguez laughs with friends as she waits outside Ireland's consulate in Caracas, Venezuela, Jan. 28, 2014. Venezuela's best and brightest are abandoning their homeland in droves. "I'll blindly go anywhere," said Rodriguez, who has been unable to find work as a journalist since graduating college in 2010, so instead works as a sales clerk at a clothing store.

AP Photo/Fernando Llano

"It's very sad that having invested so much in institutions to develop quality human resources we can't take advantage of them to add dynamism to

the economy," said Anitza Freitez, a Caracas-based demographer who has studied migratory trends. She estimates the number of Venezuelans living abroad jumped 12 percent between 2005 and 2010, a pride-shattering reversal for a country whose oil-fueled prosperity made it a magnet for immigrants from southern Europe and South America for much of the last half-century.

Ties with Ireland stretch back to Venezuela's 19th century war of independence — one of Liberator Simon Bolivar's closest aides was an Irish military officer named Daniel O'Leary. But until recently fewer than 200 Venezuelans were living there, according to Freitez's research.

Now, Venezuelans rival Brazilians, a country with a population seven times

larger, as the biggest foreign student population at many Irish language schools.

And the exodus keeps building. Seda College in Dublin said it received 7,640 unique visitors to its website from Venezuela in January, equal to a third of total inquiries for all of 2013. MeQuierolr.com, or "I Want To Go," a Venezuelan website that provides information to people looking to emigrate, also reported record traffic this month at twice the normal levels.

So popular has Dublin become among Venezuela's youth that leading satirical website El Chiguire Bipolar recently joked it had become Venezuela's safest city — a reference to the violent crime that overruns Venezuelan streets, another factor driving people overseas. □



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MooMBA Beach among world's top spots to catch the Super Bowl! PALM



BEACH - Wow, isn't it fantastic: Aruba's MooMba Beach is mentioned on the internet as one of the seven best warm-weather spots in the world to watch the upcoming Super Bowl. While your feet are in the sand and a balmy breeze is caressing your face, other fans will be shivering in a fierce winter storm in the open-air MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. Your choice is easy: just grab a flight to Aruba, Punto Cana, the Turks and Caicos, St. Maarten, the Bahamas, Puerto Rico or book a Caribbean cruise to watch

the exciting match-up between AFC champions Denver Broncos and NFC champs Seattle Seahawks during an escape from the cold. The internet text goes as follows: 'Yes, it's a restaurant and no, you won't sleep there. It's the headliner here because it's one of the best beach bars anywhere, and it's strategically placed within a few steps of either the high-end Marriott Ocean Club and the more modestly priced Holiday Inn Resort on the other. Pick your hotel, just be sure to hit the Bowl party at MooMba's. Big



screen TV's on the beach, and you can even reserve a spot.' The article continues: 'Speaking of choices,

that's what sets Aruba apart. It's a longer flight than most of the Caribbean, but it's well worth it. The island has an unmatched combination of hotel and casino choices, making it best in class in non all-inclusive options.' A photo of three lovely girls with cocktails in their hands illustrates this wonderful review. MooMba Beach always

puts on a great Super Bowl event, complete with hot dogs and chicken wings, beers in a bucket, DJ's and much more, so visitors will feel right at home watching the action on the big screens, cheering and partying throughout the day and night. Make your reservations early, though: MooMba fills up pretty fast! □






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EAGLE BEACH - Recently, ATA representative Marouska Heyliger had the great pleasure to present many loyal visitors of Aruba with their distinctive certificates. This time at the Divi Village & Divi Links. The honorees for Goodwill Ambassador were Donald and Betty Bauer of Pennsylvania, Mary Quinn of New Hampshire, June Leone and Torsten Benson of New Hampshire, Grace Di Mare of New York, Joseph and Stephanie Apuzzo of New

York, and Albert and Mary Fabrizio of Massachusetts. The honorees for Distinguished Visitors were James and Gloria Palazeti of Ontario, Paul and Judy Tellier of Connecticut, and Bob and Michele Boyle of New York. All the honorees love coming back to Aruba for the Beautiful Weather and Hospitality of the Aruban People. Honorees are seen in the photos together with the Divi Village and Links GM and Staff. Congratulations to all! □

ATA honors loyal visitors!

EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the La Cabana Resort as Distinguished Visitors and Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 and 20-or-more consecutive years.

The honorees were Gilbert and Karen Madrigale of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, and Robert and Dianne Hoyt of Lakewood Ranch, Florida. The honorees are loyal members of the La Cabana Resort and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants, and being on Aruba and staying at the La Cabana is like being home for them. The certificates were presented by Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Sharine Charles representing the La Cabana Resort. □



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SAVANETA - Rob Rijnbout (Piano), Gerrald Martes (Flute), Jaap Ridderbos (Cornet) and Catherine Provence-Hanrath (Piano) in cooperation with the Chapel and Philippine community, presented on Sunday January 26, 2014 a beautiful Benefit Concert for the Philippines. This took place in the Chapel on the Dutch Marine Base in Savaneta. The proceeds will be used to help the Philippines because of Typhoon "Hai-yan" and is given to the foundation 'Sagip Kapamilya'. □



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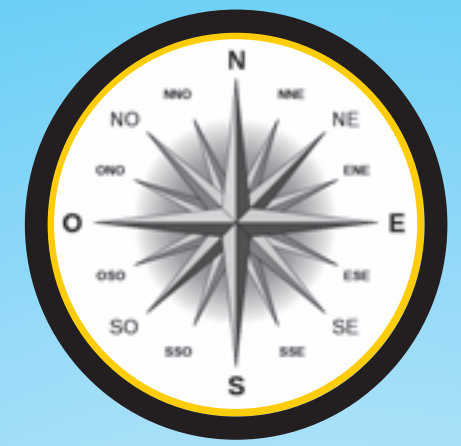
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Wilson looking to be the Super Bowl QB star

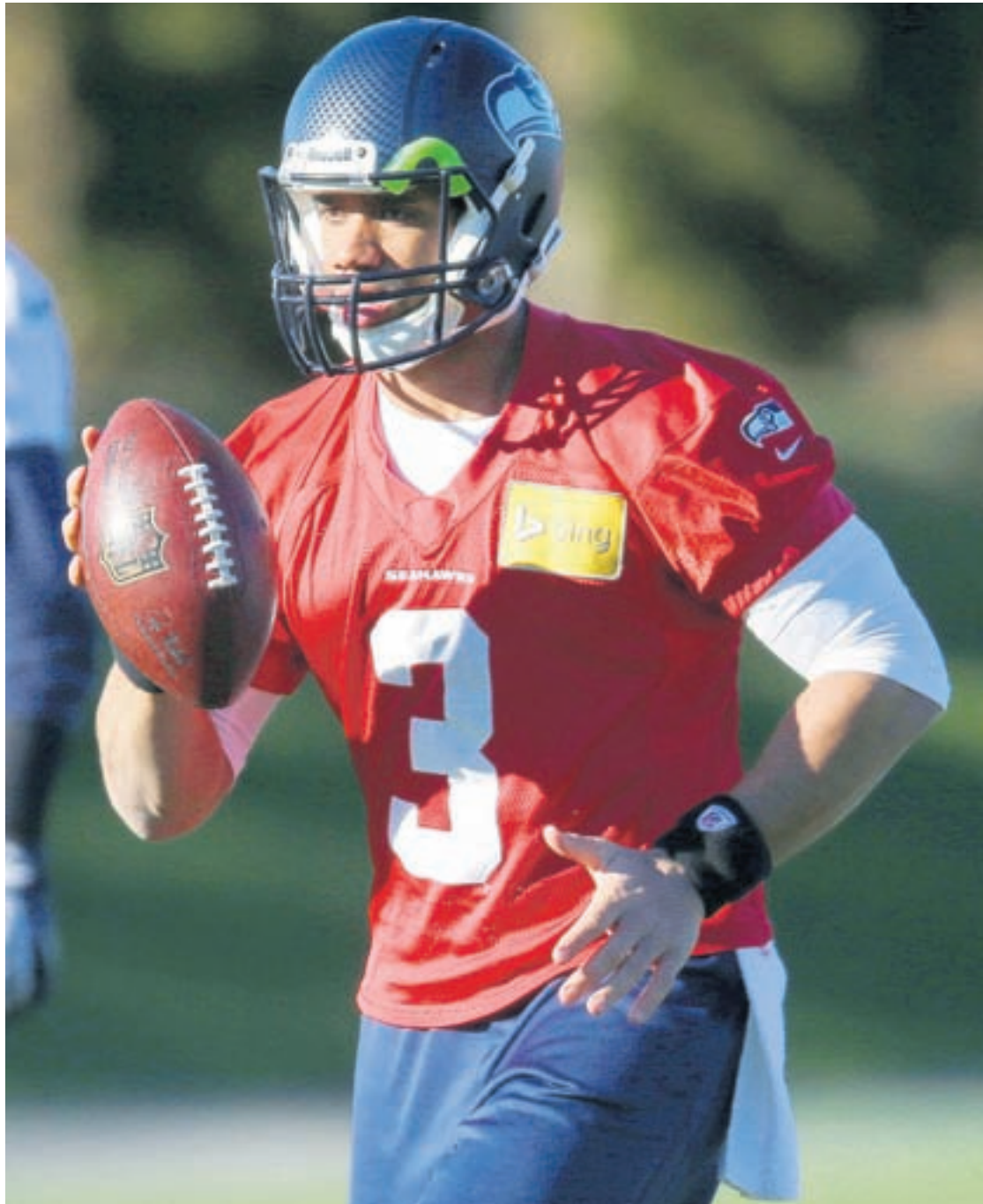
JERSEY CITY, New Jersey (AP) — The captain was a few minutes late, though no one seemed to mind.

Russell Wilson is usually worth the wait, and no more than on this day, his final one speaking about the game before he actually plays The Game.

Peyton Manning is supposed to be the star of this Super Bowl, but a minor league second baseman who refused to listen to those who said he was too small to play quarterback in the NFL may have something to say about that. Proving people wrong is almost as fun for Wilson as winning football games, and he's done both with great regularity since being drafted with the 75th overall pick two years ago by the Seattle Seahawks.

"For all the kids that have been told, no, that they can't do it, or all the kids that will be told no," Wilson said. "That's one of the reasons that I left playing baseball, to be honest with you. I had this urge to play the game of football, because so many people — I shouldn't say so many, a handful of people — said I couldn't do it.

Richard Sherman will be the player most remembered from the win that got Seattle here. But if not for a gutsy play on an



Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson (3) tosses a football during warm-up drills before NFL football practice, Friday, Jan. 24, 2014, in Renton, Wash. The Seahawks are scheduled to play the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XLVII on Sunday, Feb. 2, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

equally gutsy call, the Seahawks would not be in position to win their first Super Bowl title. Wilson found Jermaine Kearse in the end zone for the touchdown on a fourth down against San Francisco in the NFC championship game, giving the Seahawks the lead for the first time.

It was the kind of play a veteran star like Manning might make when it counts most. The kind of play Wilson prepared for meticulously every day for the past two years. The kind of play that can win a Super Bowl. "I don't think I've seen too many people have the knack to want to be great. He wants to be a great quarterback," receiver Percy Harvin said. "He just doesn't want to be average or All-Pro. He wants to be talked about as a great quarterback and I don't think he's going to stop until he does." By now, Wilson's story is fairly well known. The son of the late Harrison Wilson III — a star athlete at Dartmouth who became a lawyer after briefly thinking of trying out for the NFL in 1977 — he lost a job as starting quarterback at North Carolina State while playing second base in the Colorado Rockies organization.

Continued on Page 22

Utah ape predicts Seahawks will win Super Bowl

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A Utah ape that has correctly picked the Super Bowl winner for six straight

years is predicting the Seattle Seahawks will be the

next NFL champion. Erica Hansen of Hogle Zoo in Salt Lake City says Eli the ape ran into an enclosure Thursday and swiftly knocked down a papier-mache helmet bearing the Seahawks logo, signaling his pick. She says there was no hesitation. That could mean bad

news for Broncos fans. The 13-year-old primate hasn't been wrong since 2006. Last year, Eli charged out and knocked over a papier-mache goal post decorated with the Ravens logo. Sure enough, the Ravens beat the 49ers 34-31. □

This image provided by the Hogle Zoo shows Eli the ape with a paper mache Seattle Seahawks helmet she chose over a Denver Broncos helmet, predicting the winner of this Sunday's Super Bowl at the Hogle Zoo in Salt Lake City, Thursday, Jan. 30, 2014. Eli has correctly picked the Super Bowl winner for six straight years.

Associated Press



NHL Capsules

Penguins widen East lead with win over Kings

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jussi Jokinen had a goal and two assists in the first period, Evgeni Malkin scored in the opening minute, and the Pittsburgh Penguins chased Jonathan Quick in a 4-1 victory over the struggling Los Angeles Kings on Thursday night.

Chris Kunitz and Tanner Glass both scored in their second straight game for the Penguins, who opened a two-game West Coast road trip with the franchise's first regulation victory at Staples Center.

Jeff Zatkoff made 30 saves in the Eastern Conference leaders' fourth win in five games.

Anze Kopitar scored his third goal in five games for the Kings, but those are the only goals scored in the last nine days by the Kings, who have lost seven of eight.

The Kings had played their last eight games away from Staples Center, including last weekend's "home" game at Dodger Stadium. They've got a four-game homestand heading into the Olympic break, but still haven't solved their scoring woes.

Kunitz scored his career-high 27th goal and Jokinen added his 16th on the NHL's best power play in the first period.

DUCKS 5, FLYERS 3

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Ryan Getzlaf scored the go-ahead goal in the final minute of the first period and Anaheim also got goals from Corey Perry, Patrick Maroon and Daniel Winnik.

Saku Koivu added an empty-net goal and Frederik Andersen made 27 saves, helping the Ducks improve their NHL-leading record to 40-11-5 and their home mark to 22-2-2. They have won 22 of their last 26 games.

Winnik gave the Ducks a 4-2 lead with a short-handed goal, the ninth allowed this season by the Flyers — tying Edmonton for the league lead.

Koivu broke up a pass in the Ducks' zone and went off

on a 2-on-1 break with Winnik, who beat Steve Mason to the glove side with 7:34 remaining while teammate Hampus Lindholm was off for high-sticking Claude Giroux.

Vincent Lecavalier, Matt Read and Michael Raffl scored for the Flyers, and Mason stopped 23 shots.

AVALANCHE 5, WILD 4

DENVER (AP) — Semyon Varlamov had 35 saves and John Mitchell had a goal and an assist, leading the Avalanche to the win. Matt Duchene had two assists for Colorado. Ryan O'Reilly, Paul Stastny, Nathan MacKinnon and Maxime Talbot also scored.

It was quite a day for the 25-year-old Varlamov, who also finalized a five-year contract extension with Colorado that runs through the 2018-19 season.

The Avalanche won the season series with the Wild 4-0-1 and moved nine points ahead of them in the Central Division. Zach Parise had two goals and two assists and Mikael Granlund and Jason Pominville also scored for Minnesota, which went 9-4-1 in January to get into the thick of the postseason race.

MAPLE LEAFS 6, PANTHERS 3
TORONTO (AP) — Nazem Kadri had three assists, including his 100th career point, and the Maple Leafs earned their fifth consecutive home victory.

James van Riemsdyk set a career high with his 22nd goal for Toronto, which scored five straight goals after falling behind 2-0 in the first. Joffrey Lupul, Nikolai Kulemin and Tyler Bozak each had a third-period score.

Toronto (28-21-6) has won eight of 10 overall. It was coming off a 3-2 win against Tampa Bay on Tuesday night.

Nick Bjugstad and Sean Bergenheim scored in the first for Florida (21-25-7), and Dmitry Kulikov had a third-period goal. Scott Clemmensen made 26 saves. □



Pittsburgh Penguins center Sidney Crosby, top, celebrates a goal by left wing Jussi Jokinen, of Finland, on Los Angeles Kings goalie Jonathan Quick during the first period of an NHL hockey game, Thursday, Jan. 30, 2014, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

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Suns inflict rare home defeat on Pacers

The Associated

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Goran Dragic had 28 points and seven assists and the Phoenix Suns handed the Indiana Pacers just their second home loss of the season with a 102-94 victory Thursday night.

Gerald Green and Marcus Morris scored 16 points apiece to help the Suns win their fourth straight game.

Roy Hibbert had 26 points and David West added 18 for the Pacers (35-10).

Dragic dunked with 44 seconds left to give the Suns a 100-94 and seal the win.

The Suns scored 66 points in the first half — the most given up by the Pacers in a half this season since the Suns scored 62 on Indiana a week ago in a 124-100 win.

WARRIORS 111, CLIPPERS 92
OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — David Lee had 22 points and 11 rebounds and Andrew Bogut grabbed 17 boards to help Golden State beat Los Angeles.



Indiana Pacers forward Paul George, left, draws the charge from Phoenix Suns forward P.J. Tucker in the first half of an NBA basketball game in Indianapolis, Thursday, Jan. 30, 2014.

Associated Press

Stephen Curry scored 22 points and handed out seven assists, and Bogut added 14 points and three blocks to highlight Golden State's dominating performance down low. The Warriors outrebounded the

Clippers 53 to 34 and outscored them 66 to 22 in the paint. Blake Griffin finished with 27 points, Darren Collison scored 22 and DeAndre Jordan grabbed 20 rebounds for Los Angeles, which had won four straight.

The Clippers looked worn out after beating Washington on Wednesday night in Los Angeles, dropping to 10-4 since All-Star point guard Chris Paul has been sidelined with a separated right shoulder.

KNICKS 117, CAVALIERS 86
NEW YORK (AP) — Carmelo Anthony and rookie Tim Hardaway Jr. each scored 29 points, J.R. Smith embarrassed a couple of defenders on his way to 19, and New York beat Cleveland for its fourth straight victory.

The Knicks led nearly all the way and wrapped up a 10-6 January after going just 9-21 through the end of December. They have rebounded from losing the first three games on their franchise record-tying, eight-game homestand and can finish it with a winning record if they beat Miami on Saturday night.

Kyrie Irving scored 24 points for the Cavs on a day in which his long-term commitment to Cleveland was again questioned. □



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Peyton Manning spreads the wealth in Denver

ARNIE STAPLETON

AP Pro Football Writer

Seattle's "Legion of Boom" secondary led by Richard Sherman and Earl Thomas may be able to slow down, say, Demaryius Thomas, in the Super Bowl. That doesn't mean Peyton Manning will have to tap the brakes on Denver's Lamborghini offense.

Manning doesn't have just one go-to receiver like most quarterbacks.

He has five. The Seahawks will match up the NFL's top pass defense this season against the best passing offense of all time in the Super Bowl on Sunday.

"That's the matchup everybody is going to be talking about, Peyton Manning vs. the Legion of Boom," Hall of Famer and TV analyst Troy Aikman said. "I'm excited to see it."

Even if wintry weather curtails his passing prowess, Manning can downshift as easily as he can dial up a deep pass. The turbo-charged Broncos have morphed into a yard-chewing, clock-eating machine in the playoffs. With Manning dinking and dunking his way downfield, Denver's three most time-consuming drives of the season have all come in the last three weeks, seven-minute masterpieces that rendered San Diego quarterback Philip Rivers and New England's Tom Brady short-tempered sideline spectators to Manning's magic.

He simply has more outlets



In this Jan. 12, 2014, file photo, Denver Broncos tight end Julius Thomas (80), wide receiver Demaryius Thomas (88), wide receiver Wes Welker (83) and quarterback Peyton Manning (18) wait as officials review a fumbled pass by Thomas during the second quarter against the San Diego Chargers in an AFC divisional NFL playoff football game in Denver.

Associated Press

than defenses have answers for.

"It's hard to catch a break with him, catch a tendency or something that you can jump," Sherman said of Manning.

Of all the records Manning and the Broncos set this season, the one that stands out to Denver wide receivers coach Tyke Tolbert is this: No team in NFL history ever had five players reach the end zone 10 or more times until Demaryius Thomas (14), Knowshon Moreno (13), Julius Thomas (12), Eric Decker (11) and Wes Welker (10) did it this season.

"That tells you about the players we have on our team, the way Peyton spreads the ball out, how anybody can score at any given time," Tolbert said.

No other team has ever had more than three players hit double-digit touchdowns.

This quintet helped the Broncos break the once-unfathomable 600-point barrier and each of them also caught 60 or more passes. No team had ever had five players do that before, either.

Manning says his unprecedented 55 touchdown

passes and 5,477 yards through the air are only temporary records which will be surpassed by Brady or Drew Brees in no time — or by any number of other quarterbacks if owners get their way and expand the regular season to 18 games. But Tolbert thinks the 5-10 guys have nothing to sweat.

The beauty of the Broncos' offense is in its balance. Manning targeted his three starting receivers almost identically: Demaryius Thomas (8.87 times a game), Welker (8.54), Decker (8.5). Julius Thomas,

whose dozen scores broke Hall of Famer Shannon Sharpe's club record for tight ends, was targeted 6.42 times per game.

Take one away and another will burn you.

"Peyton doesn't discriminate," Decker said.

"He doesn't force passes," Demaryius Thomas said.

"He just takes what the defense gives him," said Julius Thomas, the power forward-turned-tight end who caught 65 passes for 788 yards after catching just one pass in his first two seasons.

"He just goes down the line and finds whoever is singled up," offensive coordinator Adam Gase said.

"Or whoever's wide open," suggested backup tight end Jacob Tamme, who was left all alone for a touchdown in Denver's win over New England last week.

"Yeah, that's the truth, we've got a lot of weapons on our offense," said fellow fill-in Bubba Caldwell, who caught two touchdown passes against San Diego in December when Welker was sidelined. "If you shut down one guy, we've got like four or five other guys that we can go to at any other time." The common thread among Manning's many targets, including Moreno, who had three touchdown catches to go with his 10 scoring runs, is a refreshing unselfishness in an age where prima donas so often demand passes and attention. □

Pele says he was asked to be kicker for the Giants

SAO PAULO (AP) — Pele says the New York Giants invited him to be a kicker after retiring from soccer with the Cosmos.

The Brazilian great says he was asked to join the NFL team after he "did well" in a few tryouts. But he de-

cided not to accept the invitation because he didn't want to take on more responsibilities at the time.

The 73-year-old Pele said in an interview with ESPN Brasil in New York that kicking was "wasn't too hard for him," but he didn't want

to return to sports after a long soccer career. He did not say exactly when he received the invitation.

Pele led Brazil to three World Cup titles and scored more than 1,000 goals. He retired from the Cosmos in 1977. □



Brazilian soccer legend Pele waves at the FIFA Ballon d'Or 2013 Gala in Zurich, Switzerland, Monday, Jan. 13, 2014.

Associated Press

In Year Kicker, best 2 meet in Super Bowl



In this Dec. 22, 2013, file photo, Denver Broncos' Matt Prater (5) kicks a field goal against the Houston Texans as Britton Colquitt (4) holds during the first quarter of an NFL football game in Houston.

Associated Press

By JIM LITKE

AP Senior Sports Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)

-- If the Super Bowl comes down a last-second field goal, might as well head for the fridge. If your team has the ball, the question is not whether it's going to be good - it will - but whether to pop the cork on that bottle of champagne you've been saving for

some big occasion.

NFL kickers had their best season ever by several important measures, and the two on call Sunday - Seattle's Steven Hauschka and Denver's Matt Prater - finished ranked Nos. 1 and 2. Including the playoffs, Hauschka was 39 of 41 (95.1 percent; the NFL average was 86.5), including a perfect 3 of 3 from

50 yards and beyond (NFL average: 66.9). Hauschka's longest was 53.

Prater was 30 of 32 (93.8 percent), and 7 of 8 from 50-plus. But that last number might be even more impressive, considering his range. Just this past December, in frigid, icy conditions at home against Tennessee, Prater set the league record for the longest field goal ever: 64 yards.

With these two, any ball snapped from an opponent's 35-yard-line on in is a strong candidate to squeeze through the uprights. The longest made field goal at MetLife this season was 57 yards, by Green Bay's Mason Crosby, but it came on an unseasonably warm 59-degree day in November.

Still, as desperate measures go, even a kick from the midfield stripe - and perhaps even two steps beyond, roughly 70 yards - is not out of the question.

"I know Prater can hit it," Hauschka said. "I've seen him it several times."

"Where?" a reporter asked. "In Denver," Hauschka replied. "Yeah, he could hit

75 for sure."

"Without wind?" came the follow-up.

"Yeah," Hauschka said. "For real."

Exactly how Hauschka wound up witnessing those feats speaks volumes about the kicking fraternity and the lack of job security. It's why the profession's unofficial motto is: "Everybody wants your job during the week. But nobody wants it on Sunday."

Like Prater and nearly every other NFL kicker, Hauschka went undrafted out of college and Denver was the fifth of the six teams he's kicked for - a stint in Detroit lasted all of 18 days - in his six seasons in the league. He wound up in an emergency relief role with the Broncos in December, 2010, when Prater pulled a groin muscle.

The two became fast friends, even as they battled for the starter's job at training camp the following fall.

"We got along great," recalled Prater, who kicked for three other clubs before gaining a foothold in Denver in 2007. "He was a real professional. We were com-

peting for a job and then we'd go get dinner. Just a fun guy to be around."

Not coincidentally, the two ran into each other again on Wednesday at MetLife Stadium. Hauschka had just finished practice as Prater was coming in. Their respective scouting reports revealed a lot about how they view their craft.

"I'm not one to try and overanalyze," Prater said. "It was nice. The conditions were pretty good and the ball was flying pretty good."

Asked whether he was following the weather forecasts for Sunday, Prater leaned back in his chair.

"Everyone else has been keeping me updated," he laughed.

Hauschka, on the other hand, described his brief kicking session this way: "Pretty typical winds, kind of go from Denver's sideline to our sideline. Wind usually comes from the west, then bounces off that side of the stadium and then blows toward our sideline. ... I've looked at it on film, I've kicked there a couple times, and it's always been doing that." □

Wilson

Continued on Page 22

Wilson would give up baseball to star as a graduate student at Wisconsin, leading the Badgers to the Big 10 title and a spot in the Rose Bowl. But he was undersized at 5-foot-11 and languished in the NFL draft before Pete Carroll and the Seahawks took a chance on him for what was expected to be a backup quarterback position.

Instead, Carroll called him to the basketball court at the team's complex prior to his rookie season, where Wilson watched him shoot jumpers.

"I go outside and he said, 'You want to shoot?'" Wilson said. "Then he said, 'We want you to know you're going to be the starting quarterback for the Seattle Seahawks, hopefully for a long time.'" "That put a huge smile on my face. I



Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson reaches for the ball during NFL football practice Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2014, in Renton, Wash. The Seahawks play the Denver Broncos in the Super Bowl on Feb. 2.

Associated Press

immediately thought of my mom and dad and all the things they've done for me and all the discipline they gave me."

That discipline is evident in the way Wilson approach-

es his job as both the quarterback and leader of his team. Like all quarterbacks he watches film, but Wilson is constantly studying situations and is relentless about fixing mistakes.

"He makes everyone around him almost a perfectionist because we pick up off that and the habits that he has," said receiver Ricardo Lockette. "He is always the first one there in the morning and the last one to leave."

Those habits helped propel the Seahawks to an 11-5 record last season behind their rookie QB. They beat the Washington Redskins in the first round of the playoffs, then lost a shootout to Atlanta that had Wilson down in the dumps - if only for a moment.

By the time he was in the tunnel going back to the locker room he had already begun thinking what he had to do in the offseason to get the Seahawks over the hump this year.

"I want to change the game and there's a difference between being good and being great and changing the game," Wilson said. "Guys like Pey-

ton Manning change the game in terms of the way he thinks and in terms of the way he processes things. Tom Brady is the same way, he's so clutch that people fear him. One day I want to evolve to that."

Wilson can take a big step in that direction should he join an elite group of quarterbacks (Brady, Kurt Warner and Ben Roethlisberger) who have won a Super Bowl in just their second year. He's certainly not overwhelmed by the moment, and seems to embrace the challenge, even when it comes to answering the same questions over and over during the pregame buildup.

A great believer in visualization, he already sees himself on the field at the Meadowlands, is already trying to figure out how to feel when the national anthem is sung and the stadium erupts in flashes for the kickoff. □

McIlroy retains Dubai lead, Woods 8 shots back

BERNIE McGUIRE

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Rory McIlroy hit wedge into 5 feet for birdie on the 18th hole for a 2-under 70 to regain the outright lead in the Dubai Desert Classic on Friday. The chief challenge for McIlroy came from an American — but it wasn't Tiger Woods.

Brooks Koepka, who earned his European Tour card last year by winning three times on the Challenge Tour, made seven birdies against no bogeys for a 65 that left him one shot behind McIlroy going into the weekend.

Woods, meanwhile, hit only four fairways and had to rely on some key putts to salvage a 73. He was in a tie for 44th, eight shots out of the lead.

McIlroy was at 11-under 133.

He appeared to be in control at Emirates Golf Club, leading by three shots after his birdie at No. 10. But he drove wildly into the waste area on the par-5 13th and the par-4 16th holes, both leading to bogeys, before recovering on the 18th.

"It was nice to birdie the last and at least give myself a one-shot lead going into tomorrow," McIlroy said. "I will just go back tonight and sort of regroup and realize I am still leading the tournament. I was more frustrated on the back nine, as the back nine is where you want to

build your score after playing the harder front nine." Danny Willett of England, who began his week by jumping out of a plane at 4,000 meters (13,000 feet), had a 65 and shared third place with Damien McGrane of Ireland (70) and Julien Quesne of France (70).

ie was on the par-3 11th, with a shot into 2 feet. Instead of going to the practice range after his round, he conducted a clinic with Mark O'Meara. "I was on so many parts of the golf course today that I got to meet so many people, signed so many autographs out there and gave

here I never made a 10-footer for not shooting 80," Woods said.

As for his round on Friday, he said he putted well, but had too many putts from 40 and 50 feet, which is "not exactly the best thing."

"I just didn't hit it close enough and didn't hit it well," Woods said. "I strug-

Peter Uihlein, who bogeyed his last hole to miss the cut.

"Winning is winning," said Koepka, who has four Challenge Tour wins. "I've been able to do it on the Challenge Tour, so hopefully I can get it done with week."

It should be more difficult with McIlroy, a two-time major champion, starting to regain his form. McIlroy ended a year without winning in December when he edged Adam Scott at the Australian Open. He finished one shot behind in Abu Dhabi two weeks ago. "I'm leading the golf tournament. I've been in this position before and I've went on to win," McIlroy said. "I've led from the front quite well in tournaments that I have won. I feel like I am still playing well and I know the course just as well as anyone else. I'm now expecting to go out there and shoot two good scores over the weekend and hopefully lift the trophy."

Willett, along with his wife and caddie, began the week with an assisted sky dive on Monday in a charity event. He feels it might have helped with his golf.

"If you stand on the first tee, trying to hit a drive into the fairway seemed a little bit less nerve-racking than jumping out of a plane at 13,000 feet," Willett said. "You never know, might have prepared us quite well." □



Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland hits a bunker shot during the second round of the Dubai Desert Classic golf tournament in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Friday Jan. 31, 2014. Associated Press

Henrik Stenson, who won the Race to Dubai and the FedEx Cup last year, had a 67 and was four shots behind.

Woods, trying to join Ernie Els as the only three-time winners of the Dubai Desert Classic, opened with a birdie on his third hole and the highlights were few after that. His only other bird-

a lot of balls away," Woods joked with the crowd. "Seriously, I was just hitting it sideways."

He even joked about the 79 he shot last week at Torrey Pines to miss the 54-hole cut on a course where he had won eight times previously, including a U.S. Open.

"I have to tell everyone

gled with it and had a bad warm-up, as well. Just one of those days."

Koepka is in his first full season on the European Tour. He came close to winning the Frys.com Open last autumn in America before struggling on the back nine. He is roommates in Florida with another American on the European Tour,

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Chevron says earnings fell 32% in 4th quarter

JONATHAN FAHEY
AP Energy Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Chevron profit fell 32 percent in the fourth quarter on lower oil and gas production and lower prices for refined fuels relative to the cost of crude.

Chevron Corp. reported Friday net income of \$4.93 billion on revenue of \$53.95 billion for the final three months of 2013. That's down from net income of \$7.25 billion on revenue of \$56.25 billion during the same period of 2012.

The nation's second-biggest oil company earned \$2.57 per share, a penny less than analysts polled by FactSet had expected. Chevron shares were down 3 percent to \$112.93 as the market opened.

Chevron had signaled that results would be relatively weak in a recent update for investors, and the company met those diminished expectations, says Brian Youngberg, an analyst at Edward Jones. He called the results "not disappointing, but more like mediocre." Despite the U.S. oil and gas boom, Chevron's domestic production fell 4 percent in the quarter as increases in Pennsylvania and Texas were offset by declining production in older fields. Chevron's international production fell 3 percent in the quarter.

Chevron, based in San Ramon, California, has been championed by investors in recent years for providing the best growth among major integrated oil companies. But growth stalled last year and the company said Friday that production would rise less than 1 percent in 2014. Better growth is now expected in 2015 and 2016.

This even though Chevron spent \$41.9 billion on new projects around the world in 2013, a record for the company, up from \$34.2 billion in 2012.

Youngberg says while it's frustrating to see the growth pushed back, he does expect it to come.

Judge okays Bank Of America mortgage settlement

MICHAEL CORKERY
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A New York state judge Friday approved an \$8.5 billion agreement by Bank of America to settle most of the claims by nearly two dozen mortgage securities investors.

In a 53-page decision, Justice Barbara R. Kapnick of state Supreme Court in Manhattan ruled that the 2011 settlement was reached in good faith.

The settlement had been challenged by the American International Group, an investor in the mortgage securities, which contended that the trustee overseeing the bonds did not push aggressively enough for more money from Bank

of America.

Lawyers for AIG argued that the settlement shortchanged investors and accused the trustee, Bank of New York Mellon, of shirking its duties in a process fraught with conflicts of interest.

"The trustee did not abuse its discretion in entering into the settlement agreement," the judge wrote, "and did not act in bad faith or outside the bounds of reasonable judgment."

Kapnick took one exception. She said claims by investors regarding loan modifications could stand because the trustee, in this instance, had settled the claims "without investigating their potential worth or

strength."

The ruling could be a significant step in Bank of America's protracted legal battles related to subprime lender Countrywide Financial, which the bank acquired in the summer of 2008. As part of the settlement, Bank of America agreed to make servicing improvements to the Countrywide loans in the 530 mortgage-backed securities at issue in the case. The case also sheds light on how active a role a bond trustee plays in protecting the rights of bondholders when their investments drop in value. The ruling could serve as a precedent for other mortgage securities cases still winding their

way through the courts five years after the financial crisis. We are pleased that the court refused to approve the proposed settlement in its entirety and found that the trustee acted unreasonably in agreeing to compromise billions of dollars of investor claims," AIG said in a statement. "We respectfully disagree with the other aspects of the court's ruling, which are not supported by the record and which set a dangerous precedent that could eliminate important protections for investors. This case is very far from over because the settlement will not take effect until a variety of potential post-trial motions and appeals are resolved."

Stocks end tough January with another decline

KEN SWEET
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Stock investors were hit from all sides in January.

Concerns about the global economy and U.S. company earnings, as well as

downturn as healthy, given the U.S. market's torrid 30 percent rise last year.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 5.3 percent in January, the worst start to a year since 2009. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell

a gain of nearly 30 percent, its best year since 1997.

"No amount of negative news could derail the market last year," said Jonathan Corpina, a floor trader at the New York Stock Exchange with Meridian Eq-

points, or 0.7 percent, to 1,782.57 and the Nasdaq lost 19.25 points, or 0.5 percent, to 4,103.88.

Many investors expected 2014 to be a more muddled and volatile for the market. Market strategists late last year were looking for the S&P 500 index to notch a modest gain of 4 percent to 6 percent, ending in the range of 1,850 to 1,900.

Investors were also looking for more pullbacks this year and possibly a correction, the technical term for when a stock market index like the S&P 500 falls 10 percent or more. Three months ago, analysts at Goldman Sachs said there was roughly a 60 percent chance that a correction would happen this year.

"People did look at these stock market valuations at the beginning of the year with a degree of nervousness," said David Kelly, chief market strategist with J.P. Morgan Funds. "A correction would probably be healthy for the market."

But many investors were surprised by January's turbulence. With one exception, the Dow had triple-digit moves every trading day in January.

Still, with the broader S&P 500 index down just 3.6 percent from its January 15 peak, the downturn is hardly severe.



Intrawest Resorts Holdings CEO William Jensen, second from right, is applauded as he rings the New York Stock Exchange opening bell, to mark his company's IPO, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014. Denver-based Intrawest is a mountain resort and adventure company.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

turmoil in emerging markets, led major indexes to their worst month in two years. However, many investors remain hopeful that the problems in January will not spill over into the rest of 2014.

They even see this month's

3.6 percent this month and the Nasdaq composite fell 2 percent.

Investors entered the year with some degree of skepticism and nervousness. The stock market went basically straight up in 2013. The S&P 500 index ended 2013 with

uity Partners.

But no stock market can go straight up forever.

On Friday, the U.S. stock market closed out January on yet another down note. The Dow fell 149.70 points, or 0.9 percent, to 15,698.91. The S&P 500 dropped 11.61

Mattel reports disappointing holiday season

EL SEGUNDO, California (AP) — Mattel says it was a tough time in toyland this past holiday season. Shares of Mattel dropped more than 9 percent in pre-market trading Thursday after the world's largest toy maker said sales of key toys like Barbie and Fisher-Price preschool items dropped in its fourth quarter. CEO Bryan Stockton called 2013 a "challenging and transformative year at retail."

Toy makers count on the November and December holiday season to make 40 percent or more of annual revenue. But traditional toy makers are struggling as kids turn more toward electronic devices and video games.

While fourth-quarter net income climbed 21 percent from year-ago results depressed by a litigation charge, its quarterly performance missed both analysts' estimates and the company's own expectations.

For the three months ended Dec. 31, Mattel Inc. earned \$369.2 million, or \$1.07 per share. That compares with \$306.5 million, or 87 cents per share, a year ago. The prior-year period included an \$87.1 million litigation charge.

Analysts surveyed by FactSet expected earnings of \$1.19 per share.

Revenue dropped 7 percent to \$2.11 billion from \$2.26 billion. Analysts expected \$2.37 billion.

Barbie and Fisher-Price sales both declined 13 percent. Sales for Hot Wheels fell 8 percent.

One bright spot was American Girl, which reported a 3 percent sales increase. Mattel said the performance was mostly helped by sales of the 2013 Girl of the Year, Saige.

CEO Stockton said weakness was mostly in the U.S. and the El Segundo, California-based toy maker is continuing to invest in emerging markets like China and Russia. Mattel's full-year net income increased to \$903.9 million, or \$2.58 per share, from \$776.5 million, or \$2.22 per share, in the previous year. □

Wal-Mart lowers full-year profit expectations

BENTONVILLE, Arkansas (AP) — Wal-Mart said Friday that key earnings figures may come in at the low end or below its prior forecasts for its fourth quarter and full fiscal year. It also said a widely watched sales metric for the fourth quarter which includes the holiday season will be lower than its previous forecast.

The news initially sent Wal-Mart shares lower but they were up by early afternoon. The world's biggest retailer said the lower earnings outlook reflect accounting for some Brazil-related charges and other items. Chief Financial Officer Charles Holley said in a statement that these items were not anticipated when Wal-Mart previously provided its forecasts.

The lowered outlook for sales at stores open at least a year was due in part to eight winter storms that resulted in some store closings, Holley said. He added that its Sam's Club locations were hurt by

weather throughout the quarter.

The sales performance was also hindered by a bigger-than-expected impact from the federal

with its revised forecasts. The retailer only said that its fiscal fourth-quarter and full-year adjusted earnings from continuing operations may come in at or slightly

was for \$5.11 to \$5.21 per share.

Analysts surveyed by FactSet predict fourth-quarter earnings of \$1.65 per share and full-year earnings of \$5.16 per share.

It also said sales — excluding fuel — at Walmart and Sam's Club locations in the U.S. open at least a year would be slightly below its prior forecasts. The chain previously expected the key sales figure would be relatively flat at its name-sake locations in the U.S. and that it would be between flat and 2 percent at Sam's Club. Sales at stores open at least a year is a closely-watched indicator of a retailer's health. Shares of Wal-Mart Stores Inc. had fallen as low as \$73.64 in morning trading on the news but were up 22 cents to \$74.97 in afternoon trading Friday.

The revisions came less than a week after Wal-Mart announced that it was eliminating 2,300 workers at its Sam's Club division. □



Tracey Anderson, 26, re-stocks X-Box sets on opening day of a new Wal-Mart on Georgia Avenue Northwest in Washington. Wal-Mart said Friday, Jan. 31, 2014, that its fiscal fourth-quarter and full-year adjusted earnings from continuing operations may come in at or slightly below the low end of its prior forecasts. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

government's reduction in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits that went into effect on Nov. 1, Holley said.

Wal-Mart didn't provide specific numbers to go

below the low end of its prior forecasts. It previously projected fourth-quarter adjusted earnings from continuing operations between \$1.60 and \$1.70 per share. Its 2014 guidance

MasterCard 4Q profit climbs 3 percent

PURCHASE, New York (AP) — MasterCard Inc.'s fourth-quarter earnings climbed 3 percent as rising payment volume countered a jump in expenses, but the results fell short of financial analysts' expectations.

That sent shares in the Purchase, New York, payment networks company down 5 percent in morning trading Friday.

MasterCard said net income grew to \$623 million, or 52 cents per share, in the three months that ended Dec. 31. That compares with \$605 million, or 49 cents per share, a year earlier.

Earnings in the most recent quarter totaled 57 cents per share, not counting a litigation-related charge.

Revenue climbed 12 percent to \$2.13 billion, as consumers hit stores for holiday shopping.

Analysts anticipated adjusted earnings of 60 cents per share on \$2.14 billion in revenue.

MasterCard said its revenue climbed partly be-

cause of a 13 percent increase in processed transactions to 10.4 billion and a 14 percent increase in gross dollar volume.

But that was partly offset by an increase in rebates and incentives that the company offered in conjunction with renewed deals signed during the quarter.

Operating expenses, which included a \$95 million provision for a litigation settlement, rose 21 percent to \$1.21 billion.

Analysts were not anticipating the increase in operating expenses and rebates and incentives, which led to the disparity in the consensus earnings forecast and MasterCard's results.

Still, the growth in rebates and incentives is likely a positive for MasterCard's longer-term growth prospects, Barclays analyst Darrin Peller wrote in a research note.

MasterCard does business all over the world, and its results are a window into how people are spending

at all different income levels. U.S. consumer spending grew during the Octo-

ber-December quarter at the fastest pace in three years. □

CONDOMINIUMS FOR SALE



Listing # 890 \$ 399,000

LAS ROCAS

A first floor condo that was built in 1995 in Tierra del Sol. There are three spacious bedrooms with closet spaces and two full bathrooms with bath-tubs. The location of this condo is perfect; very quiet, lots of privacy and overlooking the golf greens.



Listing # 961 \$ 649,000

OCEANIA

This fine condominium is located on the third floor in the Oceania Resort - Palm Building. Close to Eagle Beach offers; 24/7 gated security. There is a separate guestroom and bathroom. sold completely furnished and has a private garage.



Listing #993 \$ 699,000

OASIS

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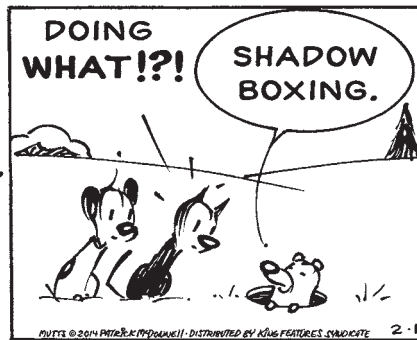
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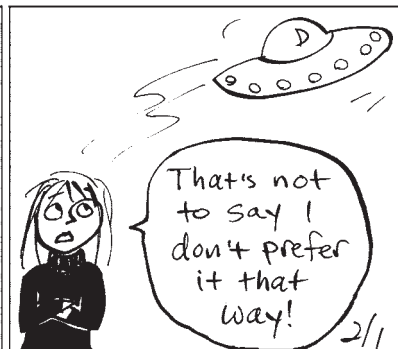
Mutts



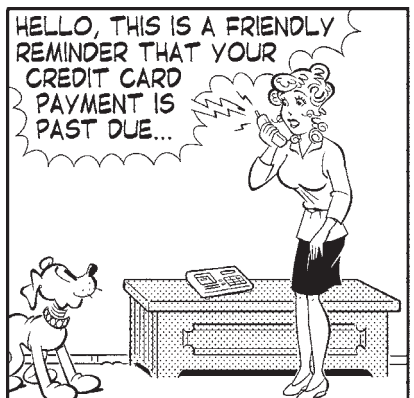
OH YES, MOOCH. I'M IN GREAT GROUNDHOG SHAPE. I'VE BEEN IN TRAINING FOR WEEKS.



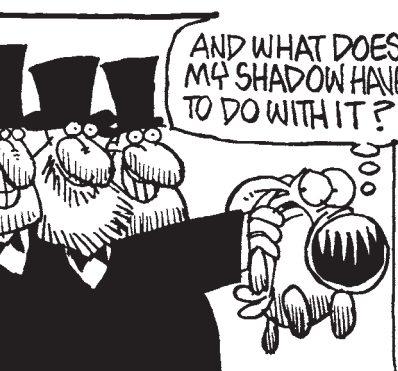
6 Chix



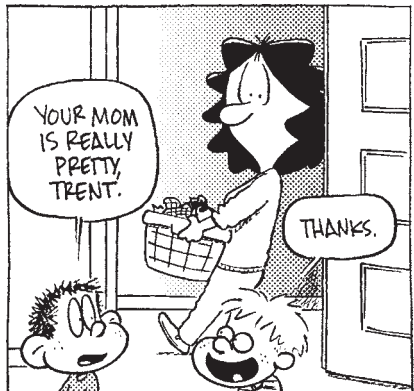
Blondie



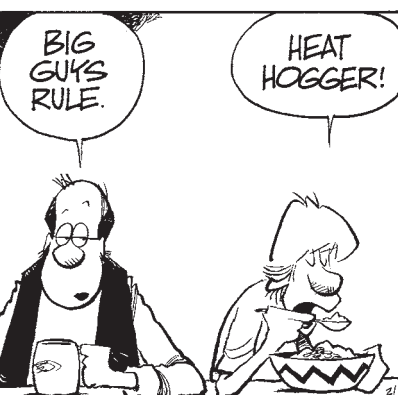
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	5	4	3		8	1	7	
8								2
7								9
2				7				8
		6	3	4				
6				9				7
1								4
3								5
	6	9	1		7	2	8	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2/01

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

3	2	9	5	4	1	8	7	6
5	8	7	3	2	6	4	9	1
1	4	6	7	9	8	2	5	3
2	3	4	8	5	7	1	6	9
9	7	1	6	3	4	5	8	2
8	6	5	9	1	2	3	4	7
4	9	3	1	7	5	6	2	8
6	1	2	4	8	9	7	3	5
7	5	8	2	6	3	9	1	4

ACROSS

- Birthday party dessert
- out; get rid of gradually
- "... the word!"
- Willing to listen and reconsider
- Cruise ship
- Sitting on
- Become liquid
- Furry swimmer
- Unusual
- Large fish-eating birds
- Hunted illegally
- Golfer Ernie
- Bony food fish
- Nighttime
- coffee, perhaps
- Passing craze
- Educate
- Unusually growth
- Actor Holbrook
- Part of the eye
- Ice; cold
- historical period
- Bullfighter
- TV's
- Rather
- Compensated
- Pres. Martin
- Buren
- Writing table
- Astaire and MacMurray
- Last child for Rose Kennedy
- Sits for an artist
- Dissuade
- the birds; ridiculous
- Ran fast
- Napoleon's title
- Man whose wife has died
- Conceited
- Passion
- Bangkok native
- Observed
- up; absorbs
- Brass instrument
- Space agcy.
- Lovers' meeting
- Pull hard

DOWN

- Singer Perry

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16		
17				18						19		
20				21			22		23			
			24			25						
26	27	28			29			30		31	32	33
34				35			36					
37			38			39				40		
41		42				43				44		
45					46				47			
			48	49			50					
51	52	53					54			55	56	57
58				59		60				61		
62				63						64		
65				66						67		

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/1/14

Friday's Puzzle Solved

COW	OMANI	SLEW
AWES	RIPEN	LAVA
BEEP	AMISS	EWER
SKINNIEST	INNS	
GIGS	RAG	
PAROLE	PLUSHEST	
ELATE	POOCH	RHO
AIDS	WORST	PEAK
LEI	SHUTS	LUCRE
SNOOPERS	HASTEN	
CAN	GASH	
RIDE	ESSENTIAL	
AREA	VOWED	EPIC
JOAN	ERASE	RENO
ANNS	REBEL	SEN

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2/1/14

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 39 June honoree | 51 Level; smooth |
| 42 Parts added later to books | 52 Poet Angelou |
| 44 Oz visitor | 53 Eskimo; ice cream treats |
| 46 Extreme fright | 54 Stir-fry pans |
| 47 Pea casing | 55 Horseman's cry |
| 49 Browned bread | 56 Make a salary |
| 50 One of 4 bases in baseball | 57 Skater's oval |
| | 60 Doris or Dennis |

Super Bowl Fever Hits Manhattan, but Many There Aren't Catching It

JAMES BARRON

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NEW YORK - The orchids are dying, and Cliff Jacobs blames the Super Bowl. No, the kickoff is not until Sunday. What is killing the orchids, he said, is Super Bowl Boulevard, the urban theme park celebrating the big game that was constructed on 14 blocks of Broadway that were closed to traffic Monday. Whenever the door opens in the flower shop he runs, cold air blasts in. This week, the door has been opened not by people who want bouquets, but by people who want warmth after standing a little too long on Super Bowl Boulevard. On the wide new stages that have gone up on Super Bowl Boulevard - and in the tents and on the toboggan run, tall but temporary - the theme is fun: the fun of the Super Bowl, the first ever played in the New York area; the fun of big-name celebrities; the fun of crowds. But in shops like the one Jacobs works in, and in the back seats of taxis inching along side streets - and in the front seats, after impatient passengers start yelling at the drivers - the theme is misery. "It's a disaster," Jacobs said Wednesday. That is a refrain in midtown Manhattan among the New Yorkers who were there last week and will be there next week, and see this as a disruption for the record books. Office workers complain that the crowds on Super Bowl Boulevard clog the sidewalks, slowing the dash to the subway at the end of a long day. Students grumble

that they have to allow additional time to get to class to avoid being marked as tardy. Some store clerks say they are seeing fewer customers and ringing up smaller tabs than in a normal week. "Where are the people?" asked Pat Hughes, the owner of Lansdowne Road pub. "We are a sports bar, and the Super Bowl has brought no additional business." The conventional wisdom used to be that the weeks between Thanksgiving Day and New Year's Day, when crowds poured into the city for a glimpse of the tree at Rockefeller Center, brought the worst traffic of the year, or at least the most gridlock-alert days. But the Super Bowl celebration has many New Yorkers sounding crankier than usual as they cope with blocked-off streets and unexpected detours. "You'd think the city would have a better plan than just putting a Super Bowl party in the middle of town," Wilson Montoya, a delivery-truck driver. He said slow traffic had tacked three hours onto his workdays Tuesday and Wednesday. Some drivers said the tie-ups outdid traffic jams during the U.N. General Assembly sessions, when even diplomacy seems to move faster. "Twenty-five years driving in Manhattan, and this is the worst," Jose Rodriguez, who delivers orders to restaurants for O. Ottomanelli & Sons Prime Meat Market. Super Bowl Boulevard itself struck some New Yorkers as jarring in a city that pretty much invented all things urban. □

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pool/ocean view
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mbre51@aol.com

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2 Bedroom Condo Unit 3544
Weeks 5,6,7sun-sun
3 Bedroom Condo Unit 3548
Week 8 sun-sun

Mini enhanced rooms

1 bedroom first floor unit 1570
weeks 7 & 8 fri-fri
2 bedroom first floor unit 1566
weeks 5 & 6 fri-fri
1 bedroom 5th floor unit 5562
week 17
Email: cljhn@aol.com
Tel: 297-566-4608

201079

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wk 3 ocean, pool view Room
1318...20K
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wk 3 Room 1511
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e-mail:joansmo25@yahoo.com

201072

Timeshare FOR SALE

Casa del Mar

weeks 4 and 5
1508 sunset view
\$24,000 per week
e-mail: jbehlke@verizon.net

202108

DOCTOR ON DUTY Oranjestad



Feb. 1 Dr. Alvarez
Feb. 2 Dr. J. Croes

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NOORD	587-0009
STA. CRUZ	585-4710
SAVANETA	584-7000
SAN NICOLAS	584-5000
FIRE DEPT.	115
FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
POLIS TIPLINE	11141
HOSPITAL	527-4000
AMBULANCE	582-1234
SAN NICOLAS	
AMBULANCE	584-5050

PHARMACY

O'STAD: Dakota Tel: 588-7364
S. NICOLAS: Aloe Tel: 584-4606

INFORMATION	118
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TAXI	582-5900
TAXI-TAS	587-5900
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TAXI D.T.S.	587-2300
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Feb. 2
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Seabourn Pride

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American Airline	582-2700
Avianca	588-0059
Dutch Antilles	588-1900
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Tel: 583-8989

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Women in Difficulties

Foundation

Tel: 583-5400

Bloodbank Aruba

Tel: 587-0002

Brands vie to stand out amid Super Bowl chatter

BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — If it's on TV, it's on Twitter, at least when it comes to blockbuster events such as the Super Bowl.

Advertisers, in particular, are ready to capitalize.

"What advertisers have realized is that Super Bowl advertising doesn't just take place on TV, with your 30-second or 60-second spot that you paid millions of dollars for," said Debra Aho Williamson, an analyst for research firm eMarketer. "You really need to have a broader presence."

Last year's Super Bowl, the National Football League championship game and most-watched event on U.S. TV, was interrupted by a 34-minute power outage — luckily, for one advertiser at least. Oreo seized on the opportunity and tweeted "you can still dunk in the dark." It was retweeted and mentioned on Facebook thousands of times.

Every brand wants to be this year's Oreo. Brands are setting up social media "war rooms" so they can respond to memorable events as they happen — be it another blackout, a snow storm or a wardrobe malfunction — with clever, retweetable quips.

Volkswagen has set up a studio in Los Angeles to create quick, catchy video responses, said Jennifer Clayton, media manager at the automaker. There will be about a dozen people in the room, from creative and production folks to community managers in charge of monitoring chatter on social media. Once a video is shot, it'll be sent to Volkswagen's lawyers for approval and, within 20 minutes, posted on Twitter.

"We are taking advantage



In this Sunday, Feb. 5, 2012, file photo, New York Giants fan Brian Poarch, of Greenville, S.C., watches the broadcast of the NFL football Super Bowl between the Giants and the New England Patriots, in a midtown Manhattan bar in New York.

of all the conversations going on out there and making it even more impactful," she said. "We're taking a 30- (or) 60-second spot and turning it into a campaign that's multiple days and multiple screens."

The game is a big day for Twitter, too. The company will have its own employees in the "war rooms" of some advertisers, helping them identify what people are tweeting about the most and helping them develop quick, clever reactions.

Beyond advertising, people will be conversing with fellow fans, using Twitter hashtags such as #Seahawks, #Hawks and #12s for the Seattle Seahawks and #Broncos, #Denver and #UnitedInDenver for the Denver Broncos. There will be #SB48 for the Super Bowl and #AdScrimmage to vote for your favorite Super Bowl ads. People have also created unofficial ones — such as #PotBowl — a reference to the fact

that the teams hail from states that have legalized recreational marijuana.

Advertising, though, is where a lot of money is at stake.

For every Oreo, there are dozens, perhaps hundreds of tweets that fall flat, even if they were conjured in a room full of social media experts and marketers. During last Sunday's Grammys,

"a lot of brands tried to do it but only one stood out," Williamson said.

That one was Arby's. Singer Pharrell Williams showed up at the awards show wearing an oversized, puffy brown fedora. It quickly got its own parody Twitter account (with more than 18,000 followers), not to mention all the Twitter mentions. The fast-food

chain known for its big cowboy hat logo quickly tweeted "Hey @Pharrell, can we have our hat back? #GRAMMYS."

It went over well. Arby's tweet got more than 83,000 retweets and a response from Williams himself: "Y'all tryna start a roast beef?"

"Brands need to have the perfect storm of the right opportunity, the right message and most critically, a relationship between your brand and whatever it is that you are trying to connect about," analyst Williamson said. "If it's forced or if (it looks) planned, it's going to come across negatively." M&M's marketers plan to use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the video-sharing app Vine to distribute short animated videos made from peanut M&M's. The clips will include commentary from the legendary retired quarterback Joe Montana.

Seth Klugherz, senior director for Mars Inc.'s M&M's brand, said in a statement that the brand is "not simply hoping to 'win the night' with a single post or tweet" but add to viewers' experience throughout the night. □

Obama: I care deeply about 'net neutrality'



Avaaz joins with other US advocacy groups to deliver more than a million signatures for a free and democratic internet to the FCC in Washington using a giant digital counter on Thursday, Jan. 30, 2014.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama says the U.S. government is exploring options for keeping the Internet free and open

after a federal court set aside rules designed to do just that.

A three-judge panel earlier this month set aside rules

intended to ensure that the transmission of Internet content be treated equally, without priority given to some types of traffic over others. Obama says it's an issue he cares deeply about, partly because his campaign was powered by an Internet that was free of commercial barriers.

He says a court's decision must be respected, at least initially, but that the Federal Communications Commission is examining its options. Those options include appealing the court's decision or coming up with a new set of rules. Obama commented Friday during a chat on Google Plus Hangout. □

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Despite critics, 'Single Ladies' gains viewers

JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Actress LisaRaye McCoy has heard of some of the harsh reviews of her VH1 romantic comedy series, "Single Ladies," that call the show's script and acting subpar. But McCoy says numbers speak louder than words. "We proved them wrong and it has lasted," said McCoy, who stars as Kiesha Green on the show, which airs Monday nights on VH1. The hour-long series is about three very fashionable women who are best friends dealing with the trials of dating and relationships. It also stars Denise Vasi (Raquel Lancaster) and Charity Shea (April Goldberg). "It's a foundation of girls that are friends and (who are) real, bridging the gap, showing the women out there that you can get along and have fun with each other," McCoy said. "It's something

different than the (stuff) they are showing on reality television." This season's guest stars include rapper T.I., LaLa Anthony and Keke Palmer. When "Single Ladies" debuted in 2011, some critics said the female characters seemed to be "operating from a false sense of empowerment." The series was also criticized as being "replete with tired situations" and having "stiff dialogue." But the show has been attracting viewers. According to the Nielsen company, the second season of "Single Ladies," produced by Queen Latifah's Flavor Unit Entertainment, averaged 2.3 million viewers. The season three premiere drew 2.6 million viewers and scored 1.74 in the ratings, a 51 percent increase compared with the previous season's debut.

VH1, which is striving to produce a non-reality show that appeals to women,

believes the popularity of "Single Ladies" will grow with the addition of former Destiny's Child singer LeToya Luckett, who plays an unsympathetic record executive. "You always feel like you kind of have to raise the bar every season," said Jill Holmes, the network's senior vice president of West Coast production and development. "I definitely think there's pressure anytime you have such an avid following such as 'Single Ladies.'" Vasi said the drama of the characters' dating life in a lavish setting offers an intriguing element. But she also noted that viewers like to check out the characters' stylish outfits.

"That's a big part of our show," said Vasi, whose character runs a popular boutique in Atlanta. "We are teaching and influencing the audience, saying, 'Hey, you can try something like this.' Or like in 'Sex



This image released by VH1 shows Denise Vasi from the series "Single Ladies," airing Mondays at 9p.m. EST.

Associated Press

and the City,' you'd watch Carrie (Bradshaw) wearing outfits you really didn't understand all the time, but it was a choice and you had to respect it. ... We are doing the same thing."

Luckett feels confident about the future of "Single Ladies." "People with the show have been very hands-on, making sure this comes out to be great," she said. "Normally, every-

body is showing up for a check. I've been on sets like that. They're like, 'OK, when am I getting paid? Where is my per diem?' Nobody really knows their lines. "But this feels different. It's positive energy, even for girls. Everybody has been so sweet to each other, and I love that. I think those have been ingredients to making this a great show." □

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Cases may mean more than legal woes for Bieber

ANTHONY MCCARTNEY

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Justin Bieber's court cases on both sides of the U.S.-Canadian border could complicate the pop star's jet-setting ways as his troubles bring more scrutiny by judges and prosecutors. Legal experts said a decision by Toronto authorities to charge the 19-year-old Bieber with assault on Wednesday makes his legal situation more complicated and difficult to untangle. He is already facing a driving under the influence case in Miami and remains under investigation for felony vandalism in California.

All the cases are in the early stages and it's uncertain whether the Grammy-nominated singer might be convicted of any charges. But if he is, it would impact how judges deal with him, said Stanley L. Friedman, a former federal prosecutor who now practices criminal defense in Los Angeles.



In this June 28, 2013 file photo, Justin Bieber performs at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

"I think the legal system is much more likely to treat him harshly as somebody who needs to be taught a lesson," Friedman said. "Now he's become a national poster child for being

a bad boy." Andrew Flier, a criminal defense attorney who has represented sports stars and actors, said immigration issues are likely Bieber's biggest problem at this point.

If the singer is convicted, he could get closer scrutiny when traveling from his homeland of Canada to the U.S., where he now lives.

"Multiple convictions even on misdemeanors could be troublesome to the non-citizen," Flier said.

Bieber has pleaded not guilty to DUI, resisting arrest without violence and driving without a valid license in the Miami case.

A preliminary toxicology report released Thursday showed that he tested positive for marijuana and the anti-anxiety drug Xanax. Bieber told police after the arrest that he had been smoking marijuana and had taken a prescription drug. In California, the singer remains under investigation for an egg-tossing incident that left his neighbor's house with thousands of dollars in damage. If Bieber is charged in that case, a California judge may look at him more harshly in light of the Florida and Toronto cases, said Stan Goldman, a criminal law professor at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles.

"The fact that you've got three is a heck of a lot worse than one," Goldman said.

Bieber has not addressed the vandalism claim in California, and his attor-

ney Howard Weitzman has said the singer's legal team believes their client is innocent in the Toronto case.

Friedman agreed and said Bieber's other cases might make it more likely that he will be charged in Los Angeles. Prosecutors have a lot of discretion in how they pursue cases, and a judge has limited influence in the early stages about what deal Bieber might be offered or whether the case goes forward.

If Bieber is convicted in any of the cases, he would lose the benefit of the doubt that judges often give first-time offenders, Goldman said. For example, a judge could opt to keep Bieber on a long probation sentence to make sure he stays out of trouble, Goldman said, citing the case of Lindsay Lohan.

The actress has been on some form of probation constantly since taking a plea agreement after being arrested twice for driving under the influence and drug possession in 2007.

Numerous stars have had their international travel curtailed because of legal trouble, and attorneys said the U.S. and Canada both view drug offenses harshly when deciding immigration issues.

A Los Angeles judge restricted Lohan's travel during the height of her probation. Japan blocked the entry of The Rolling Stones over drug convictions and in 1980 deported Paul McCartney for marijuana possession at Narita International Airport. In 2010, Japan blocked Paris Hilton from entering the country just days after she pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor drug charge in Las Vegas. R&B star Chris Brown must still have his international travel approved by a judge overseeing his probation for a 2009 attack on then-girlfriend Rihanna.

David S. Kestenbaum, an attorney who represents a paparazzo charged with driving recklessly to obtain shots of Bieber, said the pop star's troubles will likely affect his travels. □

Miley Cyrus wants voice, not twerking, to be spotlighted

RYAN PEARSON

AP Entertainment Writer

BURBANK, Calif. (AP) — Miley Cyrus wants you to concentrate on her voice — not her twerking — when she launches her tour next month.

"Ren and Stimpy" creator John Kricfalusi and contemporary artist Ben Jones have crafted videos to play during the 38 shows as Cyrus prioritizes singing over dance routines.

"When it's such a visual show, I'm not going to get up there and dance because I've got to sing live," Cyrus said in an interview Thursday night.

"So it's like to have things that people can watch other than me ... not about me trying to keep up with choreography."

The 21-year-old performer spoke at a rehearsal studio two days after per-



Miley Cyrus performs in Times Square during New Year's Eve celebrations on Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2013 in New York.

Associated Press

forming with — and spanking — Madonna at her "MTV Unplugged" concert this week. She found the 55-year-old star a kindred spirit in displaying unabashed eroticism.

"I'm not trying to replicate her or be her, but we're standing for a similar freedom," Cyrus said. "It's even

easier for me than I'm sure it was for Madonna. So I think it's going to get easier and easier, as generations go on, women are going to be more accepted to be free and embrace sexuality."

Her North American tour kicks off Feb. 14 in Vancouver. □

Sometimes Alone, Yet Not Alone



DAVID BROOKS
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There is a strong vein of hostility against orthodox religious believers in the United States today, especially among the young. When secular or mostly secular people are asked by researchers to give their impression of the devoutly faithful, whether Jewish, Christian or other, the words that come up commonly include "judgmental," "hypocritical," "old-fashioned" and "out of touch."

It's not surprising. There is a yawning gap between the way many believers experience faith and the way that faith is presented to the world.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel described one experience of faith in his book "God in Search of Man": "Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement ... get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal. ... To be spiritual is to be amazed." And yet Heschel understood that the faith expressed by many, even many who are inwardly conflicted, is often dull, oppressive and insipid - a religiosity in which "faith is completely replaced by creed, worship by discipline, love by habit; when the crisis of today is ignored because of the splendor of the past; when faith becomes an heirloom rather than a living fountain; when religion speaks only in the name of authority rather than with the voice of compassion." There must be something legalistic in the human makeup, because cold, rigid, unambiguous, unparadoxical belief is common, especially considering how fervently the Scriptures oppose it.

And yet there is a silent majority who experience a faith that is attractively marked by combinations of fervor and doubt, clarity and confusion, empathy and moral demand. For example, Audrey Assad is a Catholic songwriter with a crystalline voice and a sober intensity to her stage presence. (You can see her perform her song "I Shall Not Want" on YouTube.) She writes the sort of emotionally drenched music that helps people who are in crisis. A surprising number of women tell her they listened to her music while in labor. She had an idyllic childhood in a Protestant sect prone to black-or-white dichotomies. But when she was in her

20s, life's tragedies and complexities inevitably mounted, and she experienced a gradual erosion of certainty.

She began reading her way through the books on the Barnes & Noble Great Books shelf, trying to cover the ones she missed by not going to college. She loved George Eliot's "Daniel Deronda" and was taken by Tolstoy. "He didn't have an easy time encountering himself," she says, sympathetically. "I was reading my way from darkness into paradox."

She also began reading theology. She'd never read anything written before 1835. She went back to Augustine (whose phrases show up in her lyrics) and the early church fathers. Denominationally, she went backward in time. She became Baptist, then Presbyterian, then Catholic: "I was ready to be an atheist. I was going to be a Catholic or an atheist."

She came to feel the legacy of millions of people who had struggled with the same feelings for thousands of years. "I still have routine brushes with agnosticism," she says. "I still brush against the feeling that I don't believe any of this, but the church always brings me back. ... I don't think Jesus wants to brush away the paradoxes and mysteries."

Her lyrics dwell in the parts of Christianity she doesn't understand. "I don't want people to think I've had an easy time." She still fights the tendency to go to extremes. "If I'd have been an atheist I'd have been the most obnoxious, Dawkins-loving atheist. I wouldn't have been like Christopher Hitchens."

Her life, like all lives, is unexpected, complex and unique. Her music provides a clearer outward display of how many inwardly experience God.

If you are a secular person curious about how believers experience their faith, you might start with Augustine's famous passage "What do I love when I love my God," and especially the way his experience is in the world but then mysteriously surpasses the world: "It is not physical beauty nor temporal glory nor the brightness of light dear to earthly eyes, nor the sweet melodies of all kinds of songs, nor the gentle odor of flowers, and ointments and perfumes, nor manna or honey, nor limbs welcoming the embraces of the flesh; it is not these I love when I love my God. Yet there is a light I love, and a food, and a kind of embrace when I love my God - a light, voice, odor, food, embrace of my innerness, where my soul is floodlit by light which space cannot contain, where there is sound that time cannot seize, where there is a perfume which no breeze disperses, where there is a taste for food no amount of eating can lessen, and where there is a bond of union that no satiety can part. That is what I love when I love my God." □



More Imperfect Unions



ROSS DOUTHAT
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Whenever the subject turns to inequality and opportunity in America, the same political conversation repeats itself.

First, liberals call for more spending to raise people out of poverty. Then conservatives point out that a major predictor of poverty is family instability, and that one of the biggest boosts to opportunity comes from having married parents.

Then liberals retort: "Well, the best way to help families is to make sure they have more money. And what's the alternative - having divorced politicians hector poor women about their choices?"

Thanks to sweeping new research on American mobility, we can have this predictable debate again. Conservatives can highlight the strong correlation in the research between two-parent families and upward mobility - stronger than for variables like racial segregation and economic inequality. And liberals can dismiss marriage promotion as a chimerical goal, and double down on redistribution.

Or both sides could be a bit more honest about the roots of marriage's decline.

Honesty from conservatives would begin by acknowledging that policies championed on the right - mass incarceration in response to the post-1960s crime wave, Bain Capital-style "creative destruction" in response

to Carter-era stagnation - have often made it harder for low-income men to find steady work and stay out of prison, and made women understandably wary of marrying them.

Then this honesty would continue with a concession that certain kinds of redistribution - especially if tied to wage-earning - might help make men more marriageable, families more stable, and touch off a virtuous interaction between the financial and the personal.

Right now, I think some conservatives - though not enough Republican politicians - are willing to concede these points. But I don't see a readiness among liberals to make any concessions of their own, beyond the minimal acknowledgment that all things being equal, two parents are often better than one.

A more significant concession would be to acknowledge the ways in which liberalism itself has undercut the two-parent family - through the liberal-dominated culture industry's permissive, reductive attitudes toward sex, and through the 1970s-era revolution in divorce and abortion law. In the first case, liberals tend to feign agnosticism about pop culture's impact on morals (even though a link is common-sensical and well supported), or to blame corporate capitalism for the entertainment industry's exploitative tendencies (as though the overwhelmingly liberal people making programming decisions had no agency of their own).

In the case of abortion and divorce, liberals expected their revolution to, if anything, stabilize the family - by reducing unwanted births and dissolving only marriages that had failed in all but name. But these expectations were naive. As Janet Yellen and George Akerlof pointed out in a 1996 paper on the social impact of abortion and contraception, the power *Roe v. Wade* gave women over reproduction

sometimes came at the expense of power in relationships. "By making the birth of the child the physical choice of the mother," they noted, the sexual revolution "made marriage and child support a social choice of the father."

In this new landscape, "women who wanted children, who did not want an abortion for moral or religious reasons, or who were unreliable in their use of contraception" saw their partners' incentives altered for the worse. The result was a world with plenty of unplanned pregnancies but fewer ensuing marriages, fewer involved fathers, more unstable homes.

Meanwhile, no-fault divorce probably contributed to the unexpected "social contagion" effect of the divorce revolution, in which the example of a marital split undermines marriages across a social network. And it created new reasons to delay marriage in the first place, given the risk of investing in a venture that could be unilaterally dissolved.

Many marriages, especially in the upper-middle class, were strengthened by caution and delay. But for couples with more limited resources, and more to lose from failure, no-fault divorce may have reduced the value of the institution and the sacrifices embraced on its behalf.

When liberals claim social conservatives don't have any policy ideas for marriage promotion, then, they're somewhat self-deceived. A sustained conservative shift on abortion policy and marriage law probably would, over the long term, increase the rate at which couples take vows and stay together, and improve the life prospects of their children.

So one hypothetical middle ground on marriage promotion might involve wage subsidies and modest limits on unilateral divorce, or a jobs program and a second-trimester abortion ban. □

A Pioneering Black Quarterback's Lasting Legacy

BILLY WITZ

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LONG BEACH, Calif. - President Barack Obama, hosting the undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins at the White House last summer, made his way around the green room before moving out for a public ceremony.

As the president greeted Hall of Famers like Bob Griese and Larry Csonka and the renowned coach Don Shula, and the unintentionally comedic kicker Garo Yepremian and members of the No-Name Defense, he also extended his hand to a lithe former role player and offered him a look of recognition.

"He said, 'I know you; you're a trailblazer,'" said Marlin Briscoe, the former player, shaking his head at the memory. "It blew me away."

Briscoe earned two Super Bowl rings with the Dolphins and was a Pro Bowl receiver with the Buffalo Bills, but what earned him a footnote in football history - and the admiration of a president - was the distinction of being the first African-American to start at quarterback in the AFL or the modern NFL.

Briscoe threw 14 touchdown passes in 1968 - one fewer than Joe Namath - and accumulated 1,897 yards in total offense for the Denver Broncos, team rookie records that John Elway and Jay Cutler did not break. All that earned Briscoe was one more snap at quarterback the rest of his nine-year career.

Now black quarterbacks are so commonplace that color is all but absent from the discussion. But when Briscoe settles down Sunday afternoon with a few friends to watch the Super Bowl, it will be with a personal point of pride.

Watching Seattle quarterback Russell Wilson - smart, slippery, small and strong-armed - is as close as Briscoe has come to watching himself.

"It's a good comparison," said James Harris, a former teammate and roommate of Briscoe's and the first black quarterback to be named to the Pro Bowl. "Marlin was just a victim of the circumstances of the time." Over the past decade, as the connection

among black quarterbacks has deepened, Briscoe and his place among them have gained greater appreciation. Donovan McNabb and Michael Vick treat him reverentially, and a Nike commercial featured a fictional Briscoe High football team. A movie about his life, "Marlin the Magician," is in the works.

"The dialogue has changed," Briscoe said, noting that he once endured

Gale Sayers, Bob Boozer, Johnny Rodgers and Ron Boone.

Briscoe had always played quarterback growing up, in flag football, Pop Warner or high school or at the University of Omaha (now the University of Nebraska Omaha), where he was a small-college All-American. Yet when he was drafted in the 14th round by Denver as a cornerback, it neither surprised nor offended him.

ple were changing their docile approach to life with white America. We knew we had to become aggressive to overcome stereotypes." Briscoe acquitted himself well, but when training camp began he was listed at cornerback. A hamstring injury sidelined him for the start of the regular season, but when he returned after several quarterbacks struggled, it was on offense.

A week after Briscoe came

had never played with African-Americans until they were pros. And fans loved watching him scramble and create plays, like Fran Tarkenton and Griese. But he never connected with Broncos coach Lou Saban, who told Briscoe he would not be playing quarterback the following season. Briscoe demanded a trade and briefly went to Canada, but returned when he was traded to Buffalo with



Marlin Briscoe, the first black athlete to start a game at quarterback in either the NFL or the AFL, in Long Beach, Calif., Jan. 24, 2014. Told he was drafted to play cornerback, Briscoe got a chance to lead the offense after multiple quarterbacks were hurt or benched, going 2-3 as a starter, but next season was moved to wide receiver, where he remained for the rest of his career.

(David Walter Banks/The New York Times)

questions about whether he was smart enough to play the position. "It's not black quarterback anymore, just quarterback. They're judged on the merits of their ability - or lack thereof, which is an accomplishment I'm glad to see while I'm on this earth."

Briscoe, 68, has flecks of gray in his hair now. He plays golf regularly and travels with his wife, an administrator at the Long Beach Boys & Girls Club, where he used to work. Though nerve damage in his toes causes him to walk gingerly, he still carries the athletic gait he had growing up in a multiethnic housing project in the shadow of a meat packing plant in Omaha, a spawning ground for Bob Gibson,

Briscoe, who negotiated his own contract, told the Broncos he wanted a three-day tryout at quarterback. If not, he told them, he would try to play in the American Basketball Association or get a job teaching.

"All I wanted was a chance to showcase my skills," said Briscoe, who is 5 feet 10 inches and a few biscuits shy of his 178-pound playing weight. "It was a mirror of what the '60s were about, particularly in the African-American community. We said, 'No, this is what we want,' so it was easier for me. If it had been in the '50s, no way in the world would I have done that. But I grew up in the right time to express myself.

"All over the country, peo-

off the bench, nearly rallying the Broncos past the Boston Patriots, he started against Cincinnati. He played poorly and was benched, but several weeks later, Briscoe came on to spark a victory over Miami. He took over for good when the Broncos' starter, Steve Tensi, was injured. Briscoe helped pull out a last-second win over Buffalo and then nearly did the same against Oakland. "When we saw Marlin, it gave everyone hope - all of a sudden, playing quarterback was a realistic possibility," said Harris, then a senior at Grambling State and now an executive with the Detroit Lions. "Then the bottom fell out."

Briscoe connected with teammates, some of whom

the understanding that he would be moved to receiver, a position he had not played before.

Briscoe said he was disappointed about not getting another chance at quarterback, but he says he is not bitter. He might not have won two Super Bowl rings as a quarterback, and he is proud of finishing second in the NFL in receptions and yards in 1970.

"I was a litmus test to see if it could be done," Briscoe said of playing quarterback. "There were a lot of things in the equation other than X's and O's. Would fans come to the games? Would the players play for a black quarterback? A lot of things were accomplished because I didn't fail." □